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Engaging  
Immigrant

Police in  
Communities:

Promising Practices from the Field

Pradine Saint-Fort  
Noëlle Yasso  
Susan Shah



**COPS**

COMMUNITY ORIENTED POLICING SERVICES  
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE

**VERA**  
INSTITUTE OF JUSTICE

# Engaging Police in Immigrant **Communities:**

**Promising Practices from the Field**

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The Internet references cited in this publication were valid as of the date of this publication. Given that URLs and websites are in constant flux, neither the author(s) nor the COPS Office can vouch for their current validity.

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**COPS**

Dear Colleagues,

The Office of Community Oriented Policing Services (COPS Office) is proud to have partnered with the Vera Institute of Justice on this important publication, *Engaging Police in Immigrant Communities*. The United States is a country that prides itself on its diverse communities and the importance of continuing partnerships and strengthening trust between law enforcement and all members of the community that they serve, must not be taken lightly.

This guidebook highlights 10 law enforcement agencies that have demonstrated great success in enhancing relationships with the communities they serve, specifically with the diverse members of their community. They offer proof that the use of community policing can provide law enforcement with the tools necessary to build partnerships with immigrant community members.

This resource, along with the companion podcasts, will provide law enforcement agencies with innovative ideas and strategies for engagement. These promising practices are meant to serve as guidance for duplication and should ensure that law enforcement agencies across the country are better equipped for working with all members of their community. The materials provided here also include a cadre of resources available for quick download. My hope is that the podcasts, guidebook, and the featured website offering supplemental materials, will greatly enhance the use of community policing in immigrant populations.

Bernard Melekian, Director  
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In jurisdictions large and small across the United States, the growing number of immigrants is redefining for law enforcement agencies what it means to ensure public safety. Indeed, the bridging of language and cultural divides and the building of strong police-immigrant relations constitute a new frontier of community policing that most agencies are just beginning to explore. With time and resources often in short supply, however, few can afford to experiment with untested immigrant-centered programs.

For this reason, the Vera Institute of Justice launched the *Engaging Police in Immigrant Communities* (EPIC) project in partnership with the U.S. Department of Justice's Office of Community Oriented Policing Services. EPIC is a national project to identify, assess, and promote the effective practices police agencies around the country have put in place to work successfully with their immigrant communities. In this report, we highlight the most promising of these approaches, describing the efforts of 10 departments of different sizes, capacities, and circumstances.

From the assignment of bilingual sworn officers as community liaisons to the creation of multicultural advisory councils, the initiatives profiled here are as diverse as the people they aim to serve. They are also practical and field-informed, which is essential for law enforcement agencies that want to achieve success in working with immigrant communities.

Michael P. Jacobson  
Director, Vera Institute of Justice

## Acknowledgments

The authors would like to thank the COPS Office for providing us with the opportunity to comprehensively document promising practices in this new area of policing. We hope that this, together with other publications developed by the Vera Institute and published by the COPS Office on the topic of police-immigrant relations, will enable agencies that want to effectively police immigrant populations to implement concrete and proven strategies.

We specifically want to thank our program manager, Nicole Scalisi, for her resourcefulness, attentiveness, and never-ending support for our work.

Throughout the course of this project, a number of Vera staff and interns played an important role in moving the research forward. We would like to thank Crystal Scialla, who was a RBF Fellow in Nonprofit Law with the Vera Institute, for her active participation in some of our agency site visits and ensuring that our project consistently complied with legal requirements. We would also like to thank our editor Patricia Connelly, for her thoughtful reviews and edits of numerous drafts of the report and podcast scripts. Vera's publication coordinator Melissa Cippollone also deserves mention for producing and/or editing all graphic elements included in the report. We would be remiss to not thank three stellar student interns—Rika Gorn, Insiyah Mohammad, and Aneesha Gandhi—for whom no job was too big or small. They were always available to offer an extra set of hands whenever it was necessary.

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They guided us in making the report more useful to community members who wish to partner with local law enforcement in police-immigrant relations initiatives. They and our 12 law enforcement peer reviewers generated or improved a number of the checklists that are included in the report.

In addition to serving as peer reviewers of the report, the following individuals dedicated a number of hours to crafting and recording podcasts on this topic: Monique Drier, Community Liaison, Brooklyn Center Police Department; Robin Martinson, Community Liaison, Brooklyn Park Police Department; Brian Kyes, Chief of Police, Chelsea Police Department; Sérgio Fidelis, Police Officer, Clearwater Police Department; Rafael Fernandez, Sergeant, Metropolitan Nashville Police Department; James Stormes, Colonel, Palm Beach County Sheriff's Office; and Jesse Guardiola, Police Officer, Tulsa Police Department. We thank them for their contribution to this project and willingness to be edited by numerous people.

Finally, we thank the other community policing coordinators, liaisons, chiefs, and sheriffs who have been involved in the promising practices profiled in this report. They are truly leaders in the policing field and have taken community policing to another level. We are humbled by their dedication and passion for serving all members of their communities.

## Executive Summary

Community policing philosophy encourages law enforcement agencies to actively pursue and develop meaningful relationships with the people they serve. These relationships help cultivate trust and understanding between the police and the community, which in turn make possible more effective law enforcement responses to crime and other public safety concerns. In short, community policing is effective when agencies work in partnership with the people in whose neighborhoods they work.

Shifting community demographics are changing how agencies form these police-community collaborations. As the number of immigrants in the United States continues to grow, community policing professionals routinely encounter many unfamiliar cultures and languages. As first responders, it is critical that law enforcement personnel are able to interact productively with immigrant communities and communicate effectively with all victims, witnesses, and suspects.

Because very little is known about how most of the 18,000 police agencies nationwide work with immigrant communities, in 2010, the U.S. Department of Justice's Office of Community Oriented Policing Services (COPS Office) partnered with the Vera Institute of Justice (Vera) to take a comprehensive look at how law enforcement agencies are developing effective police-immigrant relations. Vera's Engaging Police in Immigrant Communities (EPIC) project is a national effort to identify, assess, and disseminate promising law enforcement practices that cultivate trust and collaboration with immigrant communities and merit replication.

Vera staff conducted a comprehensive review of policing literature and consulted with policing experts to discern the underlying principles of promising practices for working with immigrant communities. These principles, which form the framework for this report, are:

1. Get to the root causes—Identify the underlying factors that contribute to the crime and disorder that impact immigrant populations.
2. Maximize resources—Seek ways to expand the use of available financial and personnel resources when crafting police responses to immigrant communities.
3. Leverage partnerships—Develop meaningful relationships with organizations or individuals that are deep-rooted in immigrant communities.
4. Focus on the vulnerable—Identify and support the needs and concerns of those community members who are least able to protect themselves.
5. Engage in broad outreach—Communicate directly and regularly with as many community members as possible, using varied means.
6. Train law enforcement and the community—Teach and learn about the values and practices of each other's culture.
7. Monitor successes and failures—Review programs on a regular basis to gauge how well they are responding to the community's needs and producing the desired results.
8. Sustain programs that work—Develop mechanisms to continue successful initiatives with agency-wide support.

### About Vera:

The Vera Institute of Justice is an independent, nonpartisan, nonprofit center for justice policy and practice, with offices in New York City, Washington, D.C., New Orleans, and Los Angeles. Vera combines expertise in research, demonstration projects, and technical assistance to help leaders in government and civil society improve the systems people rely on for justice and safety. Visit [www.vera.org](http://www.vera.org) for additional information.

To identify practices that exemplify these principles, Vera solicited information about law enforcement practices from more than 1,000 agencies located in jurisdictions with large immigrant populations and evaluated nearly 200 agencies' practices. The evaluation led to the selection of the following 10 agencies as national models for promising police-immigrant relations: Brooklyn Center, Minnesota; Brooklyn Park, Minnesota; Chelsea, Massachusetts; Clearwater, Florida; Everett, Massachusetts; Metropolitan Nashville, Tennessee; Orange County, Florida; Palm Beach County, Florida; Storm Lake, Iowa; and Tulsa, Oklahoma.

Just as these agencies vary in number of personnel, geography, resources, and populations served, their practices also represent a wide array of both practical and creative solutions. Examples include:

- Hiring a civilian community liaison to get to the root cause of crime and underreporting in an immigrant community
- Making tactical Spanish language and cultural training part of police academy curriculum
- Partnering with social service and legal service organizations to form a law enforcement anti-human trafficking task force
- Engaging the services of a researcher from a local university to evaluate the effectiveness of immigrant-centered initiatives

From the modest to the most ambitious, every one of the 25 promising practices discussed in this report has contributed to building strong and mutually beneficial relations with immigrant communities. With some adaptation, all of these approaches can be applied elsewhere.

## Introduction

According to the 2010 Census, approximately 40 million foreign-born people now live in the United States and seven million of them arrived within the past 8 years alone.<sup>1</sup> Fostering positive police-immigrant relations has never been more important to the success of community policing. Yet law enforcement faces many challenges in reaching new immigrant communities, including language barriers, cultural differences, distrust of police, and reluctance to report crime for fear of deportation. In an effort to overcome these challenges, U.S. Department of Justice's Office of Community Oriented Policing Services (COPS Office) partnered with the Vera Institute of Justice (Vera) to identify and disseminate information on promising practices that law enforcement agencies are using to build successful police-immigrant relations.

This report is a field-informed guide for agencies that are looking to begin or build upon their work with immigrant communities. More than 1,000 agencies across the country were asked about several topics, including the frequency of encounters with immigrants, policies and programs governing police services to immigrants, agency outreach efforts, personnel recruitment, and training activities. The practices of 175 agencies in 42 states were evaluated by Vera. Among these agencies were 133 municipal law enforcement agencies, 27 sheriff's offices, nine state law enforcement agencies, and six other law enforcement agencies. Vera's evaluation methodology included compiling each agency's police-immigrant relations practices and assigning each agency a score according to how well it embodied the principles of promising practices. After three rounds of further evaluation, which included in-depth telephone interviews and site visits, the 10 agencies profiled here were selected.

The report is organized into three sections and an appendix. The first section describes eight key principles of promising practices of police-immigrant relations. The second section follows with a more detailed discussion of how 10 policing agencies have applied these principles in the field. The third section provides a glossary of technical terms used in the report and a list of relevant resources. The appendix includes a map of all the assessment respondents and charts summarizing national trends in police-immigrant relations.

To provide additional practical guidance from the field, resources gathered from the 10 profiled agencies accompany this report, including seven podcasts and electronic copies of program documents, such as policies for serving immigrant communities and curricula for training law enforcement and community members. All companion resources are listed in the EPIC Toolkit at the end of the report and can be found on Vera's website at [www.vera.org/epic](http://www.vera.org/epic).

It is important to note that the agencies profiled in this report do much more than is detailed here; readers are encouraged to contact the agencies directly to learn more about their community policing initiatives. (See "About the Agencies" chart on page 2 for contact information.)

"When police and community work together, good things can happen on all sides."

— Brooklyn Park  
community member

1. Nathan P. Walters and Edward N. Trevelyan, *The Newly Arrived Foreign-Born Population of the United States: 2010, American Community Survey Brief* (U.S. Department of Commerce, U.S. Census Bureau, 2011, ACSBR/10-16).

## About the Agencies

Agency Name Leadership Contact Information Jurisdiction Covered (City, County, State)	Area of Jurisdiction (sq. miles)	Population Estimates	Agency Size (Sworn Officers and Civilian Staff)	Predominant Immigrant Communities
<b>Brooklyn Center Police Department</b> Chief Kevin Benner Contact: Monique Drier – <a href="mailto:mdrier@ci.brooklyn-center.mn.us">mdrier@ci.brooklyn-center.mn.us</a> Brooklyn Center, Hennepin County, Minnesota	7.96	30,104	70	Hmong, Latino, Liberian
<b>Brooklyn Park Police Department</b> Chief Michael Davis Contact: Robin Martinson – <a href="mailto:Robin.Martinson@brooklynpark.org">Robin.Martinson@brooklynpark.org</a> Brooklyn Park, Hennepin County, Minnesota	26.1	75,781	163	Hmong, Latino, Liberian
<b>Chelsea Police Department</b> Chief Brian A. Kyes Contact: Ofc. Sammy Mojica – <a href="mailto:SMojica@chelseama.gov">SMojica@chelseama.gov</a> or Claire Contreras – <a href="mailto:CContreras@chelseama.gov">CContreras@chelseama.gov</a> Chelsea, Suffolk County, Massachusetts	1.8	45,000	107	Salvadoran, other Latino
<b>Clearwater Police Department</b> Chief Anthony Holloway Contact: Ofc. Sergio Fidelis – <a href="mailto:Sergio.Fidelis@MyClearwater.com">Sergio.Fidelis@MyClearwater.com</a> Clearwater, Pinellas County, Florida	25.6	107,685	410	Mexican, other Latino
<b>Everett Police Department</b> Chief Steven A. Mazzie Contact: Ofc. Patrick Johnston – <a href="mailto:Patrick.Johnston@ci.everett.ma.us">Patrick.Johnston@ci.everett.ma.us</a> Everett, Middlesex County, Massachusetts	3.4	41,667	106	Arab, Brazilian, Haitian, Italian, Latino
<b>Metropolitan Nashville Police Department</b> Chief Steve Anderson Contact: Ofc. Gilbert Ramirez – <a href="mailto:Gilbert.Ramirez@nashville.gov">Gilbert.Ramirez@nashville.gov</a> or Commander Michael Alexander – <a href="mailto:michael.alexander@nashville.gov">michael.alexander@nashville.gov</a> Nashville, Davidson County, Tennessee	475.1	601,222	1,765	East African, Egyptian, Iraqi, Mexican, other Latino
<b>Orange County Sheriff's Office</b> Sheriff Jerry L. Demings Contact: Helen Johnston – <a href="mailto:Helen.Johnston@ocfl.net">Helen.Johnston@ocfl.net</a> Orange County, Florida	903.4	1,145,956	2,139	Haitian, other Caribbean, Mexican, other Latino
<b>Palm Beach County Sheriff's Office</b> Sheriff Ric Bradshaw Contact: Benito Gaspar – <a href="mailto:GasparB@pbso.org">GasparB@pbso.org</a> Palm Beach County, Florida	1,969.8	1,320,134	3,914	Guatemalan-Mayan, Mexican, Haitian
<b>Storm Lake Police Department</b> Public Safety Director Mark Prosser Contact: Dir. Mark Prosser – <a href="mailto:prosser@stormlake.org">prosser@stormlake.org</a> Storm Lake, Buena Vista County, Iowa	4.1	13,000	26	Laotian and Mexican
<b>Tulsa Police Department</b> Chief Chuck Jordan Contact: Sgt. Mark Sherwood – <a href="mailto:msherwood@cityoftulsa.org">msherwood@cityoftulsa.org</a> or Ofc. Jesse Guardiola – <a href="mailto:jguardiola@cityoftulsa.org">jguardiola@cityoftulsa.org</a> Tulsa, Tulsa County, Oklahoma	196.8	603,403	873	East Asian, Mexican, other Latino

## Highlighted Principles

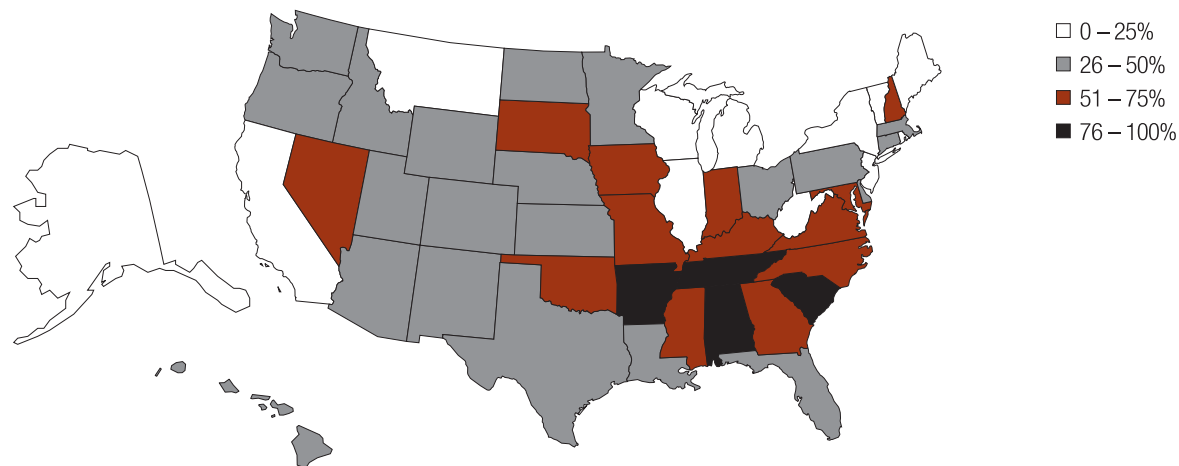
Get to the Root Causes	Maximize Resources	Leverage Partnerships	Focus on the Vulnerable	Engage in Broad Outreach	Train Police and the Community	Monitor Successes and Failures	Sustain Programs that Work
■	■				■	■	■
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### Five Common Challenges to Providing Public Safety in Immigrant Communities

- 1. Language barriers:** Language barriers can prevent immigrants and the police from understanding each other and make it difficult for police to assess and respond to calls for assistance and other situations effectively.
- 2. Many immigrants and refugees fear police and are often reluctant to report crime because they come from places where law enforcement agencies are corrupt and abusive; criminals also target immigrants because their reluctance to report crime is well-known.**
- 3. Federal immigration enforcement's effect on local trust-building:** Immigrants may not be able to distinguish between local, state, and federal law enforcement officers and may attribute immigration raids or other federal immigrant enforcement activities to local police and, therefore, mistrust community policing efforts.
- 4. Lack of awareness of cultural differences:** Immigrant communities may misunderstand how to interact with police, while police may be unfamiliar with immigrant cultural traditions and practices.
- 5. Negative experiences with individual officers:** When individual officers do not treat immigrants respectfully, the entire department's relationship with immigrant communities may suffer.

Source: Matthew Lysakowski, Albert Antony Pearsall III, and Jill Pope. 2009. Policing in New Immigrant Communities. Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of Justice, Office of Community Oriented Policing Services, [www.cops.usdoj.gov/RIC/ResourceDetail.aspx?RID=526](http://www.cops.usdoj.gov/RIC/ResourceDetail.aspx?RID=526).

Map 1. Percent Change in the U.S. Foreign-Born Population by State, 2000–2010



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, *The American Community Survey Reports, The Foreign-Born Population in the United States: 2010*, [www.census.gov/prod/2012pubs/acs-19.pdf](http://www.census.gov/prod/2012pubs/acs-19.pdf).

## Principles of Promising Practices

An agency's comprehensive approach to police-immigrant relations should aim to encompass all eight of the key principles identified by Vera. Use of these principles increases the likelihood that a department's response to public safety concerns will be effective, long-lasting, and replicable. The agency practices that are profiled in this report were selected because they can serve as useful examples for the field.

### 1. Get to the Root Causes

The primary purpose of community policing is to keep communities safe by reducing crime and minimizing other public safety concerns. Agencies that pursue this purpose most effectively first identify the underlying factors that contribute to threats to public safety. Immigrants' fear and mistrust of police, language barriers, and cultural differences make it especially challenging for police to get to the root causes of crime and disorder in their communities. However, when agencies collect and review quantitative and qualitative information about what is occurring by reviewing crime data and calls for service, and soliciting community input, they are able to understand more fully an immigrant community's public safety concerns and craft informed, deliberate solutions, instead of temporary, reactive responses. Four of the agencies profiled in this report successfully addressed recurring noise complaints, non-emergency calls, robberies, and the underreporting of crimes by focusing intensively on immigrant communities' core public safety needs.

### 2. Maximize Resources

Across the country, law enforcement agencies are asked to provide high-quality service on limited budgets. Four agencies discussed in this report have found creative ways to stretch their available financial and personnel resources while also improving police-immigrant relations within their jurisdictions. These approaches include sharing a police advisory committee that is made up of community members, placing mobile police units in areas with the greatest need, expanding the roles of staff and volunteers to overcome language barriers, and co-hosting community outreach events with other service providers.

### 3. Leverage Partnerships

Developing meaningful partnerships with organizations or individuals that are deep-rooted in local communities is an important part of effective community policing. Law enforcement agencies that partner with such groups or people are better able to address the public safety needs and concerns of the communities in their jurisdictions. While such collaboration may often require a high degree of investment and compromise on the part of both police officers and community members or advocates, it often produces high rewards: law enforcement agencies are able to share resources and expertise, find long-lasting solutions to crime problems, and increase a community's trust in its police department. Four agencies discussed below exemplify this principle by collaborating successfully with a wide range of governmental agencies and non-governmental organizations to combat human trafficking; train immigrants in their native languages about police encounters; and foster positive, lawful behaviors in local immigrant youth.



#### **4. Focus on the Vulnerable**

Local law enforcement is responsible for the safety of everyone living in its jurisdiction, especially for those who are more vulnerable to victimization because they are less able to protect themselves. The extent to which an agency serves vulnerable persons is indicative of how well it ensures public safety for the community at large. Vulnerable groups can include children, the elderly, persons with mental illness or other disabilities, and crime victims. In immigrant communities, limited English proficiency can make some even more vulnerable. Police agencies can effectively support the needs and concerns of these groups and also encourage crime reporting by dedicating a staff position, program, or policy to serve these groups. Strategies used by three agencies featured here include tailoring outreach to immigrant crime victims, establishing customized crime prevention academies, and creating programs specifically for people with limited English proficiency.

#### **5. Engage in Broad Outreach**

It is important for law enforcement agencies to have the trust of the people they serve. Regular and direct communication with as many community members as possible can help generate support for, and cooperation with, the police. It can also promote perceptions of safety and knowledge about how best to seek police assistance. Agencies can make the most of their contacts with the public by adapting communication methods to the preferences of the communities they serve. Some of the more successful practices used by four agencies profiled in this report include designating a community liaison, making use of the latest technology to reach a wider audience, hosting community forums, and participating in a humanitarian effort as a demonstration of good will.

#### **6. Train Law Enforcement and the Community**

A law enforcement agency and an immigrant community will have at least one thing in common—each has a distinct, complex culture. When members of different cultures come into contact, misunderstandings can occur very quickly. To minimize conflict, each group can benefit greatly from learning about the values and practices of the other's culture. When police officers are trained in the practical aspects of a culture, such as what behaviors or languages they will likely encounter in a neighborhood with immigrants, officers are better able to respond appropriately and make informed decisions during interactions with community members. Similarly, when community members understand the purpose behind law enforcement procedures and how they are expected to respond, they are more likely to cooperate with officers in a policing encounter. Four of the agencies described in this report established practical training programs that aim to lessen barriers between police and immigrant communities.

#### **7. Monitor Successes and Failures**

Successful community policing programs must be actively managed. They must be reviewed to gauge how well they are responding to the community's needs and producing the expected results. Consistent monitoring of a practice will ensure that new developments are identified in a timely fashion and the program is adjusted accordingly. For programs that focus on police-immigrant relations, it is critical to routinely obtain immigrant community input, through both informal and formal mechanisms. Community advisory councils can provide on-going community input from trusted sources that understand the police agency's mission and goals. Community satisfaction surveys are another useful tool to gather information from the general public. Four of the agencies profiled in this report monitor their work with immigrant communities by receiving feedback on a regular basis from community members.

#### **8. Sustain Programs That Work**

Many police agencies start new programs or initiatives with limited funding that often ends after a year or two. A program's success alone is no guarantee of its continued existence. Agencies that have found ways to sustain effective programs are better able to serve their communities over time. Successful agencies use a variety of methods to keep their programs going, and three of the agencies discussed in this report did so through formalizing personnel policies, implementing research recommendations, and allowing an initiative to become a self-sustaining community organization.

## Principles in Action: Promising Practices from the Field

The promising practices profiled in this report come from 10 different police departments and sheriff's offices and demonstrate the variety of ways the eight key principles above are put into action in the field. Though many of the practices embrace several principles, this report discusses each practice in light of a few principles to show how these principles are carried out in a policing context and what outcomes can be achieved. This report does not attempt to provide an exhaustive account of each agency's activities. The report does aim to present examples of practical and creative approaches to effective police-immigrant relations that may serve as models for other agencies.

### Brooklyn Center and Brooklyn Park Police Departments

[www.cityofbrooklyncenter.org/index.aspx?NID=146](http://www.cityofbrooklyncenter.org/index.aspx?NID=146) and  
[www.brooklynpark.org/sitepages/pid67.php](http://www.brooklynpark.org/sitepages/pid67.php)



The Brooklyn Center and Brooklyn Park police departments (collectively, the Brooklyns) serve adjacent municipalities in the northern suburbs of Minneapolis, Minnesota. Both possess similar immigrant communities consisting largely of Hmong, Latino, and Liberian immigrants. Many of the Hmong and Liberian residents came to the Brooklyns through refugee resettlement agencies. Members of the Latino community moved to the Brooklyns mainly to pursue employment opportunities and a better quality of life. While working with these immigrant populations, the police departments realized that many people did not have a clear understanding of local law or the role of police. Officers were also having difficulty understanding the cultural practices of the diverse immigrant communities in their jurisdictions. In 2005, to collectively address their shared challenges, the police departments partnered with Hennepin County and the Northwest Hennepin Human Services Council to create the Joint Community Policing Partnership (JCPP). Since many of the practices described below are initiatives of the partnership, this report profiles the departments jointly.

The JCPP manages to incorporate all eight of the principles of promising police-immigrant relations practices. Below, we discuss how the Brooklyn Center and Brooklyn Park police departments have:

- Hired civilian community liaisons to address the **root cause of ordinance violations** in the immigrant community
- **Maximized resources** by staffing some initiatives with volunteer members of their Multicultural Advisory Committee
- Created a New Americans' Academy to **train recent immigrants** in local laws and police procedures
- **Monitored their efforts** through formal evaluations and by seeking contemporaneous feedback from community partners
- Enlisted both sworn officers and civilian staff to complement and **sustain** the efforts of the JCPP

#### Get to the Root Causes

The Brooklyns noticed a spike in complaints about loud house parties and noise violations in neighborhoods where growing numbers of Liberian immigrants reside. Officers responding to these calls soon recognized a pattern: they were going to the same homes to address the same complaints over and over again. Moreover, these repeat visits by the police did not reduce the number of violations or resident complaints. Some of the police responses to these complaints even escalated into heated confrontations with community members who did not understand why police officers were interfering with their socializing.

Executive staff from both agencies met to discuss the underlying causes of this problem. They hypothesized that either the Liberian residents misunderstood what was legally permissible when hosting large celebrations in their homes or there was miscommunication between the police and the immigrant residents. To test these theories and focus more intensively on police-immigrant relations overall, the JCPP provided resources to each department to hire a civilian community liaison.

The community liaisons' first task was to convene a community-police meeting to discuss the issues. The liaisons, who were not members of the Liberian community, had to seek out community members to participate in this meeting. In their initial meetings, the liaisons introduced themselves and explained their role in the police department. After cultivating and maintaining relationships with community members and leaders, the liaisons were able to host the initial meeting and several subsequent question-and-answer sessions with members of the Liberian community and sworn law enforcement personnel from each agency. These meetings, often held in community spaces, allowed the police departments to discuss their concerns about the high incidence of noise violations and other public safety complaints. Police personnel encouraged community members to share their views on those issues. As a result, the departments learned that many new immigrants were both unaware of the noise ordinances and laws governing quality-of-life issues and did not understand the police's role in enforcing them.

Both agencies then turned their attention to developing and disseminating information that was culturally appropriate. For example, the Brooklyn Center Police Department's community liaison developed and personally distributed an informational letter written in plain English addressed to the Liberian community that explained the local ordinances and laws and the police's role in enforcing them, and invited community members to contact the civilian community liaison or a designated police officer who could answer any questions. As a result of these and other efforts, the Brooklyns were able to reduce incidences of noise violations within the growing Liberian community.

To view a copy of the informational letter addressed to the Liberian community, visit Vera's website at [www.vera.org/epic](http://www.vera.org/epic).

"Our community liaison's work with the community saved us 10-times the amount of time we spend in repeated calls for service for the same problem."

— Brooklyn Center police detective

### Maximize Resources

The JCPP's initiatives, past and present, focus on improving law enforcement relations with local immigrant communities and include teaching immigrant community members about local laws and the role of law enforcement; conducting cultural and community awareness training for law enforcement; planning and hosting outreach events; and recruiting and training multicultural police cadets. Although these initiatives have been fully supported by both agencies' chiefs and are managed by the departments' civilian community liaisons, their full implementation required the commitment of more personnel than any of the partnering organizations alone could provide.

To support the work of the civilian community liaisons of both agencies, the JCPP created a shared Multicultural Advisory Committee (MAC). MAC members include both foreign-born and U.S.-born residents of the Brooklyns, as well as representatives from the county. Members convene monthly to advise the agencies on how to serve and communicate better with the diverse communities of both cities. At meetings, members review drafts of personnel recruitment notices and training materials and discuss ideas for culturally appropriate resources the police departments could develop to address the safety concerns of all communities. MAC members also attend police-organized community events to assist agency staff and to ensure that community members see familiar faces working alongside police personnel.

**Agendas, applications, and other materials from MAC meetings can be found at [www.vera.org/epic](http://www.vera.org/epic).**

### Train Law Enforcement and the Community

The Brooklyns have become the home of many newly arrived immigrants, including refugees. The police departments frequently observed that these newcomers often do not understand the role of law enforcement and the local laws, particularly laws against public disorder or domestic violence. Refugees, in particular, are often very fearful of the police based on past negative experiences with law enforcement in their countries of origin. For these reasons, immigrants in the Brooklyns would rarely report crime or voluntarily reach out to law enforcement for assistance.



Multilingual police cadet teaching a group of recent refugees about the police. Brooklyn Park Police Department, July 2011.

“The JCPP and MAC are unique because they work with everyone and they are not restricted to only new Americans. It is important to bridge the gap between immigrant and non-immigrant communities as well.”

— Brooklyn Park Police Chief Michael Davis

To introduce newly arrived immigrants to members of the police department and teach them about law enforcement and local laws, the agencies created the New Americans' Academy. The academy is a two-hour class that meets once a week for 7 weeks, and is taught by police personnel or a local expert. Each class focuses on a particular safety topic, such as traffic safety, when to call 911, alcohol and drug use, domestic violence and child protection, gang prevention, and city ordinance enforcement activities. Each class also includes a question-and-answer period for participants to ask about crimes or public-safety concerns.

The academy is held twice a year, and each averages about 20 participants. Since 2007, the New Americans' Academy has educated more than 200 recently arrived immigrants and refugees, many of whom have gone on to take part in other JCPP initiatives, including applying for membership in the volunteer-based Multicultural Advisory Committee. Many academy graduates also encourage others in their communities to participate in the New Americans' Academy to learn first-hand from law enforcement personnel how to interact effectively with police and engage in lawful behavior.

**The New Americans' Academy lesson plan and other materials can be found at [www.vera.org/epic](http://www.vera.org/epic).**

#### The Brooklyns' Top 10 Things the Police Wish You Knew

1. Do not get out of your car if you are stopped by the police. Do not run from the police. Just because the police have stopped you, it does not mean that you are going to jail.
2. If possible, pull over to the right side of the road when you see a police car or emergency vehicle with its lights on behind you.
3. Keep your hands visible as a police officer approaches your vehicle.
4. Always carry photo identification with you.
5. Do not drive if you do not have a valid driver's license.
6. Insurance is needed for operating a vehicle and you must have a valid insurance card in the vehicle.
7. Do not use alcohol if you are going to be driving. Driving with open containers of alcohol in your vehicle is illegal.
8. When you call 911 the police will show up, even if you hang up the phone.
9. Do not use your cell phone when you are interacting with the police. Speak slowly and calmly.
10. Police are there to help you. Be honest with them.

“Most Liberians do not initially see the police as being friendly. When they see the police watching people, they assume that the police just want to put them in jail. At the academy, we learned what police really do and that when they are sitting in their cars, they are not just looking to put us in jail.”

— Liberian community member and New Americans' Academy participant

“Embedding police into any cultural event lends credibility to these events among our long-term residents.”

– Brooklyn Center Police Chief Kevin Benner

When the JCPP started, the partner agencies set the following three goals to fostering greater trust and collaboration between police and immigrant communities: 1) improve officers’ knowledge and understanding of immigrant communities, 2) improve community members’ knowledge and understanding of the law and the police, and 3) provide more opportunities for positive interaction and two-way communication between police and the community. As the JCPP dedicated time and resources on a variety of outreach and training programs, the partner agencies wanted to ensure that the initiatives remained firmly rooted in those core goals.

To monitor the diverse programming in light of these goals, the JCPP assessed the initiatives and actively sought feedback from community members. One year, they also hired an independent evaluator to review the program. Four separate evaluations were conducted in the first 5 years of the JCPP and included the review of data collected from community members and police personnel through interviews and surveys. The evaluation findings were used to adjust the structure of some of the JCPP’s larger-scale efforts. For example, the New Americans’ Academy was changed to incorporate pre- and post-testing of participants to collect real-time information about how well the class improved participants’ understanding of laws and the role of the police.

The Brooklyns also sought feedback from members of the MAC. At monthly meetings, MAC members have the opportunity, in a safe and comfortable setting, to communicate the public safety concerns of their respective communities and provide feedback on how well the JCCP programs are addressing these concerns. In this way, the police departments have a direct line to the communities they serve, and community input informs all of the JCPP’s initiatives.

Go to [www.vera.org/epic](http://www.vera.org/epic) to see the survey disseminated to MAC members.



Brooklyn Center Police Department celebrating Chinese New Year with a local Chinese dance team. Brooklyn Center Police Department, January 2012.



Officer speaking to area residents during a neighborhood event. Brooklyn Park Police Department, July 2011.

### Sustain Programs That Work

As the founding law enforcement agencies of the JCPP, the Brooklyns were keen to develop an initiative that would improve police-immigrant relations and also serve as a model for future JCPP project sites in the county. As the project gained momentum, both agencies’ civilian community liaisons, whose primary task was to conduct outreach to the immigrant community, quickly developed a roster of programmatic activities too lengthy to manage without becoming overburdened and consequently ineffective.

To support their community liaisons’ efforts and prevent exhaustion, both agencies have strategically assigned command staff, patrol officers, community service officers, bilingual cadets, and MAC community volunteers to assist in a variety of capacities. They have provided logistics and transportation support, advertised events within the community, served as trainers, and assisted with interpretation and translation. Some have also received community input before, during, and after the activities. Perhaps most important, both liaisons continue to receive full management support for involving agency personnel in their efforts and are authorized to grant overtime compensation for officers who work beyond their assigned shifts.

The robust involvement of the departments’ patrol officers and command staff in the JCPP has led to agency-wide acceptance of the partnership and support for its continued operation. Neither community liaison has become overextended to the point of being ineffective. Should either community liaison move on to another position, the initiatives will continue with wide departmental support.

### Additional Practical Tips

- Want to know more about how to work with multilingual communities when you only speak English?
- Are you a newly hired or appointed civilian community liaison and want to know how to get the support and participation of sworn personnel?
- Would you like some practical tips for making outreach efforts successful?

Listen to two podcasts featuring community liaisons from the Brooklyn Center and Brooklyn Park police departments to get practical answers to these questions and more. Listen/download the podcast at [www.cops.usdoj.gov](http://www.cops.usdoj.gov).

### What makes a good police department community liaison?

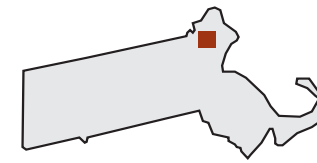
A checklist for picking the right person for the job.

Based on the experiences of the various agencies profiled in this report, a trusted and effective police-community liaison, whether sworn or civilian, will ideally:

- Care about the community he or she is serving
- Have formal training or experience in issues that affect the community he or she serves
- Understand the demographics, the cultures, the power dynamics, and competing interests present in the communities he or she is serving
- Be able to identify the people and groups that represent the needs of the community
- Have simultaneous credibility in law enforcement and community circles
- Be flexible and understand that compromises can be reached
- Clearly communicate goals, initiatives, and duties with both the law enforcement agency and the community
- Be able to put people at ease so they feel comfortable enough to communicate their needs
- Make an extra effort to portray a positive image of the law enforcement agency
- Maintain the highest ethical standards because just one publicized lapse can damage the reputation and accumulated community trust of an entire agency
- Cultivate ongoing support, starting with a liaison's immediate supervisor and extending up through the agency's chain of command
- Have a passion for this unique approach to police work

## Chelsea Police Department

[www.chelseama.gov/Public\\_Documents/ChelseaMA\\_Police/index](http://www.chelseama.gov/Public_Documents/ChelseaMA_Police/index)



Fifty-five percent of the city of Chelsea's 45,000 residents are foreign born—including immigrants from Central and South America and refugees from Somalia and Iraq—who bring to their new home many different cultures, languages, and experiences with law enforcement. Language barriers and the immigrants' fear of law enforcement challenged the Chelsea Police Department's (CPD) ability to communicate effectively and ensure the safety of both responding officers and community members. To address these problems, the CPD added a sworn community resource officer and civilian newcomer advocate position to their community policing team. Their efforts largely put into practice the eight principles of promising police-immigrant relations. Below, we highlight how the CPD:

- **Developed a targeted and strategic outreach program** by assigning the CPD chief, a community resource officer, and the newcomer advocate to work with different segments of the immigrant community
- Used the community resource officer and newcomer advocate to **train both law enforcement and newly arrived immigrants**

### Engage in Broad Outreach

In 2007, as a result of tenacious advocacy by the Chelsea Collaborative, a community-based organization, Chelsea formally became a sanctuary city. Immigrant communities did not initially understand how and to what extent the policy affected the role of the CPD in enforcing federal immigration laws. In addition, many community members were not able to distinguish CPD officers from other law enforcement personnel, including federal immigration enforcement officials, who did actively enforce immigration violations. As a result, community members often were wary of interacting with police and did not report crime, for fear of deportation. For a densely populated city of nearly 45,000 residents in just 1.8 square miles, unreported crimes can have a detrimental impact on the safety of the entire population.

To publicize the police department's non-enforcement policy with regard to immigration violations and to encourage immigrants to come forward and report crime, the chief of police became an active spokesman at Chelsea Collaborative community forums. The chief recognized that it was important that community members heard from him on this issue—to make clear that the policy was an agency-wide mandate. The chief also quickly learned that presentations at community events alone were not enough to address the community's concerns and clear up misunderstandings about police policy. The community needed more non-adversarial, helpful contacts with law enforcement.

“We realize that we cannot do it alone and we need and count on our community-based partners to accomplish our mutual goals.”

— Chelsea Police Chief Brian Kyes

To address the gap, the CPD has assigned a sworn officer to be a community resource officer to serve as a liaison between the department and the Latino community. His primary role is to cultivate trust by maintaining a constant presence in the community to deal with community concerns, educate community members about the law and their rights, and answer questions. He also is bilingual (Spanish and English), which has allowed the officer to communicate with Latino community members in their native language. The relationship that has developed between this officer and community members has improved the relationship between other CPD police officers and the community, which in turn has made distinguishing CPD officers from other law enforcement agencies much easier for Latino immigrants. In addition, the department created a civilian newcomer advocate position, to serve as the primary community contact for the city’s large refugee population.

By delegating specific tasks to the chief, a sworn community resource officer, and a civilian newcomer advocate, the CPD was able to communicate and implement its policies related to the immigrant community effectively. Whereas the chief primarily speaks to community leaders and government officials, the community resource officer and newcomer advocate, together with a growing number of other police personnel, are able to reach out to the immigrant community at large.

**A copy of the Chelsea Police Department’s policy on its role in immigration enforcement is available at [www.vera.org/epic](http://www.vera.org/epic).**

The constant influx of new immigrants and refugees to Chelsea made it difficult for the CPD to become acquainted with all of the cultural traditions and practices in the jurisdiction. Refugees, especially, often fear law enforcement because of their negative experiences with police in their home countries and know little about U.S. laws, which further impaired their full integration into the Chelsea community.



Community resource officer speaks about public safety issues to an “English for Speakers of Other Languages” class. Chelsea Police Department, February 2012.

In order to foster trust and understanding between the CPD and the diverse refugee communities residing in Chelsea, the agency hired a newcomer advocate in 2009, with funding support from the local community hospital. The newcomer advocate has learned about recent arrivals from local refugee resettlement agencies, reached out to the city’s newly arrived refugees, and provided training to both refugees and the police about each other’s culture.

To train officers, the newcomer advocate has invited members from refugee communities to talk to police officers about their previous experiences with law enforcement, as well as their cultural traditions and practices. The advocate also has created factsheets for law enforcement that briefly describe the culture, language, and life in the country of origin for each new group of refugees. The advocate distributed printed versions of the factsheets to officers during roll calls and made electronic versions available on the agency’s shared computer network.

The newcomer advocate works with the community resource officer to educate newly arrived refugees and other new immigrants about U.S. and local laws, crime prevention strategies, and the role of law enforcement in maintaining order and ensuring public safety. Each of these trainings has focused on a particular refugee or immigrant group. Trainings were typically 60 to 90 minute workshops that included an opportunity for a member of the group to describe his or her country of origin and culture, followed by brief presentations from sworn personnel of various departments, a question and answer period for community members to speak with CPD personnel, and a tour of the police station.

Through these trainings, community members and law enforcement personnel were able to get acquainted with each other in comfortable and safe settings, which made them more open to accepting new, even challenging, information about each other. As a result, initial encounters between CPD officers and new immigrants became increasingly positive because both groups better understood each other.

**A sample factsheet about a new immigrant group created by CPD’s newcomer advocate can be found at [www.vera.org/epic](http://www.vera.org/epic).**

Table 1: Pros and Cons of a Sworn or Civilian Community Liaison

**Community Liaison: Sworn or Civilian?**

Successful community liaisons can be either sworn or civilian personnel. The choice of whether to have a civilian or sworn community liaison should be based on the specific needs of a jurisdiction and its immigrant communities. The following chart offers some pros and cons for each option.

Sworn (Uniformed) Liaison		Civilian Community Liaison	
Pro	Con	Pro	Con
Has police training and knowledge to respond to crises or questions from community members	May not know as much about certain communities’ needs	Has better awareness of community needs because more integrated into the community	May not understand law enforcement culture and the tactics used by law enforcement
Assists the community to associate the uniform with helpfulness	May seem intimidating or less approachable	May seem more approachable than a uniformed officer	May not be able to influence police department culture

“Be open and flexible. You hear and see a lot of things that can be challenging for both the community and law enforcement.”

— Carrie Nedzipovik, former newcomer advocate, Chelsea Police Department, on conducting community and law enforcement trainings.

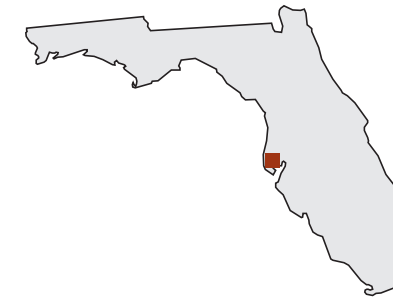
### Additional Tips

- Want to know more about how law enforcement can collaborate with community-based organizations on politically charged topics?
- Looking for some advice on selecting an appropriate community partner for a law enforcement program?

Listen to a podcast from the chief of the Chelsea Police Department to get practical answers to these questions and more. Listen/download the podcast at [www.cops.usdoj.gov](http://www.cops.usdoj.gov).

## Clearwater Police Department

[www.clearwaterpolice.com](http://www.clearwaterpolice.com)



The service and tourism industries continue to attract immigrants to the city of Clearwater, Florida, which is now home to a large Mexican population. Among the Spanish-speaking Clearwater residents, nearly 56 percent are considered limited English proficient (LEP). In working to improve communication with the immigrant community, the Clearwater Police Department (CPD) became aware of trends such as underreporting of crime and human

trafficking, which jeopardized the safety of all residents. The department was able to employ the eight promising practices principles when developing its approach to policing in its local immigrant communities. In this report, we highlight how the CPD:

- Used confidential informants **to get to the underlying cause** of underreporting within immigrant communities
- **Partnered with multiple organizations** to create the Clearwater Area Task Force Against Human Trafficking, which identifies trafficking victims, provides victim support, and uncovers trafficking networks
- **Focused on a vulnerable subset** of Spanish-speaking LEP immigrants by creating a civilian interpreter program with the YWCA of Tampa Bay
- Turned a police-supported Latino community center into a self-supporting independent organization in order to **sustain** vital services for the Latino immigrant community

### Get to the Root Causes

The CPD received information about criminal activities in the Latino community that were not appearing in the department's crime statistics. The department received this information from confidential informants (CIs), some of whom were members of the Latino immigrant community or lived in areas with a large Latino immigrant population. The department had cultivated a relationship with these CIs to obtain reliable details on illicit activities such as drug distribution or gang-related crimes. Over time, the CIs began to share information about other crimes they had heard about or witnessed that directly affected the Latino immigrant community. When the department compared the CIs' reports with its internal crime data, it realized that immigrant communities were likely underreporting crime.

“If you start peeling back the layers, you’ll find information.”

— Clearwater  
Police Chief  
Anthony Holloway

To find out exactly why Latino victims or witnesses were not reporting crime, the CPD assigned its Spanish-speaking officers to the areas that the CIs had identified as having high crime but low reporting. These bilingual officers were able to speak in Spanish with LEP community members about their concerns and the crimes that had been taking place. As a result, the department learned that underreporting was occurring largely because victims spoke little or no English or feared that the police would turn them over to immigration authorities for deportation.

The CPD responded by making its Spanish-speaking officers more visible in the Latino community by assigning officers to attend Hispanic events in the city in their formal role as CPD community liaison officers. These officers were able to convey to members of the community, in Spanish, that there was no need to fear deportation when reporting crimes, and that the department could receive community crime reports in Spanish. Today, while CPD’s bilingual officers are not routinely given assignments solely based on their language proficiency, these officers do regularly attend Hispanic community events to educate the public and encourage crime reporting. Clearwater’s Hispanic Outreach Center and other organizations have launched a media campaign in cooperation with the police to provide bilingual crime prevention tips and information on how to report crimes.

Because of the police department’s success in identifying and addressing the reason behind the underreporting of crimes, Clearwater’s Latino community members have increased their reports of robberies, sexual assaults, and other crimes.

### Leverage Partnerships

A rise in international human trafficking rings in the Clearwater/Tampa Bay area resulted in a growing number of trafficking victims in the region. CPD officers increasingly encountered trafficking victims who were either abandoned with no resources or were being forcibly exploited as sex workers or manual laborers. Because the CPD faced multiple challenges working with this special immigrant population, in 2006, the department convened the Clearwater Area Task Force on Human Trafficking to enlist the assistance of other groups also working to prevent this criminal activity and assist the victims.

The task force currently includes representatives from the CPD and other local law enforcement agencies, the U.S. Department of Homeland Security’s Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE), the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI), legal services providers, and social service providers. Each partner brings a distinct but complementary expertise to the task force. The CPD, FBI, and ICE officials regularly train law enforcement and social services providers on how to identify trafficking victims. They also train law enforcement on how to identify potential traffickers. ICE also assisted by granting temporary authorization for trafficking victims to remain in the country during the course of CPD investigations. The legal service providers train law enforcement on the options available to victims of trafficking for gaining legal immigration status and legal assistance, and assist qualified victims in applying for legal status. The social service providers support victims by helping them secure housing, clothing, and medical services.

The collaborative work of task force members has resulted in the identification of many trafficking victims and suspected traffickers and a decrease in the incidence of trafficking in the region. As of January 2011, 104 traffickers have been arrested with 37 convicted; and 25 victims of severe forms of human trafficking have been identified. The task force has also helped to curb the continued victimization of trafficked persons by connecting victims to legal and social service providers, who have assisted the victims in their applications for immigration status to the U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Service (USCIS). To date, four victims have gained T visa status and more than 30 victims gained U visa status. An additional seven victims have been granted continued presence, which allows victims of human trafficking to remain in the U.S. temporarily during the ongoing investigation into the human trafficking-related crimes committed against them.

To broaden its impact even further, the task force makes the resources it develops—public service announcements, agency policies, training materials, etc.—readily available on its website for use by law enforcement agencies throughout the state and beyond.

For more information visit the task force’s website at [www.catfht.org](http://www.catfht.org).

### Focus on the Vulnerable

In the late 1990s, the number of residents in Clearwater with limited English proficiency increased dramatically. This population was predominantly made up of immigrants from Latin America who spoke Spanish or an indigenous language. The police department, in collaboration with the YWCA of Tampa Bay, developed a civilian interpreter program to communicate with the growing number of LEP residents they served. The department then codified the civilian interpreter program into policy to ensure that all officers properly understood the interpreters’ role and would use them appropriately.

The CPD recognized that the civilian interpreter program could serve more than one purpose. In addition to providing essential language assistance to CPD officers on the beat, the program could provide communication assistance to victims and witnesses with limited English proficiency as cases moved through the criminal justice system.

The CPD and YWCA selected a few of the civilian interpreters to become state-certified bilingual victim advocates to guide crime victims with limited English proficiency as they navigated the justice system. In addition to providing general information, these advocates accompanied victims to court and helped them access victim services. The advocates also worked closely with the CPD investigators assigned to cases to facilitate victims’ cooperation and understanding of the legal process.

By providing the services of civilian interpreters and bilingual victim advocates, the CPD has been able to help crime victims with limited English proficiency feel more comfortable reporting crime and participating in investigations and prosecutions. Just as important, these services have increased the level of trust in police among a vulnerable sector of the Latino immigrant population in Clearwater. And, over time, this trust has allowed the agency to learn about and respond to additional public safety needs and concerns.

For copies of the CPD and YWCA’s training materials for civilian interpreters and CPD’s civilian interpreter program policy, go to [www.vera.org/epic](http://www.vera.org/epic).



Hispanic liaison officer speaking to local residents. Clearwater Police Department, March 2012.

“I don’t care how big a law enforcement agency is; in today’s global society you can’t do it by yourself. You have to reach out to agencies with the skill set you need to get the job done.”

— Former  
Deputy Chief  
Dewey Williams,  
Clearwater Police  
Department



### Sustain Programs That Work

Through a collaboration that started with their joint civilian interpreter program, the CPD and YWCA created the Hispanic Outreach Center (HOC) to serve the city's growing Latino community. The HOC, which is conveniently located within steps of the police department's headquarters, offers bilingual (English and Spanish) victim advocacy, family advocacy, mental health counseling, legal and immigration services, and English as a Second Language (ESL) classes. The center is also the primary workstation for the CPD's Hispanic liaison officer, whose office is located in the back of the building to facilitate confidential interviews with victims.

Although successful, after 7 years, the HOC was underfunded. Neither the YWCA of Tampa Bay nor the CPD could take on the responsibility of fundraising for the HOC. At the same time, the CPD did not want to lose the HOC as a partner. The center had provided the department with many opportunities to connect with the city's large Latino community through its various community policing activities. When the executive director of the HOC took steps to incorporate the center as its own organization, the InterCultural Advocacy Institute, the CPD was in full support. As an independent non-profit entity, the HOC now does its own fundraising and is governed by a board of directors. The CPD participates in the board meetings to stay abreast of the HOC's activities and build upon this partnership. The CPD's willingness to "spin off" one of its initiatives has led to the continued success and growth of a vital source of support for Clearwater's Latino community.

**A copy of the CPD's policy outlining its involvement with the HOC can be found at [www.vera.org/epic](http://www.vera.org/epic). For more information about how the HOC was created and the collaboration with the Clearwater Police Department, go to [www.clearwaterpolice.com/hispanic/chronology.asp](http://www.clearwaterpolice.com/hispanic/chronology.asp).**



Hispanic liaison officer visiting a local Latino business owner. Clearwater Police Department, March 2012.

#### Additional Tips

- Are you facing a transition in law enforcement personnel working on a community-policing program and do you want some guidance on how to ensure continuity?
- Is a police agency you are working with experiencing a change in leadership or other personnel and do you want to ensure that your partnership does not fall through the cracks?

Listen to a podcast featuring the Hispanic liaison officer from the Clearwater Police Department to get practical answers to these questions and more. Listen/download the podcast at [www.cops.usdoj.gov](http://www.cops.usdoj.gov).

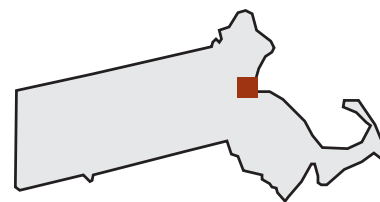
#### Do's and Don'ts of Creating Partnerships

Developing and sustaining meaningful partnerships requires true give-and-take on the part of both partners. Law enforcement personnel who took part in the practices profiled in this report offer their tips on creating a successful partnership.

- ★ Do identify the organizations or persons who may be invested in solving a particular community problem, reach out to them, and begin building a partnership before you urgently need it.
- ★ Do explain the planned benefits and outcomes of the partnership to your potential partner.
- ★ Do try to see things from your partner's perspective and listen to your partner's concerns.
- ★ Do come prepared to make concessions in some places and hold your ground in others.
- ★ Do encourage top-to-bottom agency acceptance and support for this partnership.
- ★ Do pick passionate and dedicated officers to serve as agency liaisons to the community.
- ✘ Don't call upon community partners solely when you are confronting an urgent problem.
- ✘ Don't only address criminal justice concerns—helping out with a partner's unrelated needs can go a long way.
- ✘ Don't be inflexible or refuse to explain your reasoning to a partner.
- ✘ Don't discount the importance of personalities and dedication when picking people to represent your agency.

## Everett Police Department

<http://everettpolicema.com>



In the past decade, the city of Everett, Massachusetts, has attracted several waves of immigrant communities from the Caribbean, Central and South America, and Europe, among other locations. Through a local nonprofit organization's research, the Everett Police Department (EPD) found out that these new immigrant groups were afraid of and did not understand routine local law enforcement procedures. The EPD then worked with other organizations to educate immigrants about police stops in their own language. This intensive collaboration embodied the eight promising practices principles. In this report, we focus on how the EPD leveraged a **partnership** with various organizations to educate and build ties to the city's many immigrant communities.

Many immigrants in Everett did not understand the role of local police in enforcing immigration laws or how to interact with officers during routine police encounters, such as motor vehicle stops. Some immigrants feared detention and deportation because they or their family members lacked lawful immigration status. As a result, immigrants often went out of their way to avoid any encounter with the police even if this meant not reporting crimes or accessing other emergency services, including medical services.

Through a partnership with the Joint Committee for Children's Health Care in Everett (JCCHC)—a consortium of children's advocates, researchers, and social service providers—the EPD learned about research the JCCHC was conducting on immigrant access to health care. The JCCHC found that immigrants' fear of local law enforcement was jeopardizing the safety and health of their communities. Together, building upon the EPD's policing experiences and the JCCHC's research findings, the EPD and the JCCHC sought to increase police-community dialogue.

They did this by creating a brochure titled "What to Expect When Stopped by the Police," which was translated by qualified community volunteers into Arabic, Haitian Creole, Italian, Portuguese, and Spanish. The brochure's content was based on questions that the Everett police chief received during a series of forums organized by the JCCHC with local organizations serving the city's immigrant communities. Developing the brochure was a year-long, collaborative effort between the police department and the JCCHC. During this process, community members met and became acquainted with police personnel at various levels as well as police policies and protocols.

The community forums and brochure project proved to be effective vehicles for engaging community members, educating the city's immigrants, and reducing immigrants' concerns about interactions with local law enforcement. The collaboration also encouraged the community to reach out to police personnel they met over the course of the project and report crimes. In addition, participation in the community forums helped the EPD build and sustain better relations with members of Everett's diverse immigrant community.

For a copy of the Everett Police Department's "What to Expect when Stopped by Police" brochure in multiple languages, go to [www.vera.org/epic](http://www.vera.org/epic).

### Everett's Law Enforcement FAQ

Research on immigrant groups conducted by the JCCHC and the Everett Police Department found that new immigrants in Everett frequently asked the following questions about the law, the role of police, and law enforcement procedure:

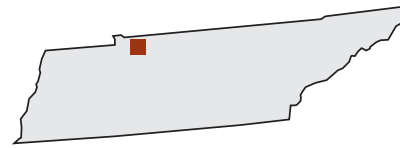
- Why do cops search or tow cars as a result of a traffic stop?
- What leads to high-speed car chases? How many car chases have there been?
- DWIs—what is the law and what happens if someone is stopped?
- Can parents discipline their kids? If so, what is allowed?
- When can someone call 911?
- Does the agency use racial profiling?
- What leads to shootings? How many shootings have happened in the past year?
- What are some descriptions of people who fit criminal profiles?
- What types of cases can be easily prosecuted?

"Creating the 'What to Expect' brochure was the product of a year-long collaboration and was itself a bonding experience between different members of the community. The creation of the brochure built up the trust between the police and the community."

— Robert Marra,  
Cambridge Health  
Alliance

## Metropolitan Nashville Police Department

[www.police.nashville.gov](http://www.police.nashville.gov)



Over the past decade, immigrant populations in metropolitan Nashville, Tennessee, have steadily increased. The city's largest group is made up of Spanish-speaking immigrants from across Latin America. To identify and respond to the needs of this

community, the Metropolitan Nashville Police Department (MNPD) created El Protector ("The Protector"), a program staffed with two full-time bilingual officers. The program was originally adapted from state highway patrol programs in California and Washington to decrease traffic fatalities in the Latino community. El Protector has a broader community-oriented policing mission: to engage the Latino community in Nashville in reducing DUIs, traffic fatalities, and domestic violence incidents, and participate in crime prevention activities. While El Protector embodies all eight principles of promising police-immigrant relations, in this report, we focus on how the MNPD expanded the reach of its program by:

- **Partnering** with private and social service organizations to host an annual day-long Hispanic Festival as well as other community events that provide services and public safety education on a large scale
- **Reaching out** through radio and social networking media to become more accessible to youth and other segments of the growing Latino population in Nashville

As Nashville's Latino immigrant population grew, the police department had to revisit how its longstanding Latino outreach program, El Protector, would be able to accommodate a thriving community of thousands. Since 2004, the El Protector program, staffed by two full-time Spanish-speaking officers, has provided bilingual and culturally tailored public safety trainings to the city's Latino community. The MNPD, in collaboration with a number of public and private organizations, typically hosted numerous small trainings and outreach events in several parts of the city where large numbers of Latino immigrants reside.

Since El Protector had existed for a number of years, its full-time officers became very knowledgeable about the public safety and social service needs of the community. In addition, community members who had interacted with El Protector became more comfortable sharing their concerns with El Protector officers. However, with the steady increase in the Latino population, it became nearly impossible for just two officers to serve the community effectively on a neighborhood-by-neighborhood basis.

To resolve this outreach issue, the MNPD developed the idea of holding an annual day-long Hispanic Festival in a large venue located in a Latino neighborhood. Such an event, the department reasoned, would allow it to provide large-scale community education that would draw in community members from various neighborhoods. But the program had a limited budget. To cover much of the event's costs, the department turned to many of the media, public, and private sector partners that the agency and El Protector had cultivated over the years. One of the corporate partners the MNPD approached was a national cell phone provider which donates cell phones and usage time for an MNPD program that enlists qualified community volunteers as interpreters. From this company, and other large private-sector organizations that valued outreach to the Latino community, MNPD was able to secure donations for equipment and entertainment.

The MNPD also invited small local businesses and community-based organizations, including immigration attorneys, health centers, and social service providers, to participate as event sponsors and exhibitors—a great opportunity for the partners to gain exposure to a growing consumer group and for the community to obtain much needed information and services.

The festival drew hundreds of community members and showcased both entertainment and vital information from a variety of providers. No one organization alone could have produced an event of this caliber reaching such a large number of the Latino community. Because of the annual festival's success and community demand, El Protector continues to organize other collaborative community events, including an annual health fair and a winter holiday event for children with special needs and their families.



Officer visiting a booth at the Hispanic Festival. Metropolitan Nashville Police Department, July 2011.

"Large community gatherings like the Hispanic Festival provide a great opportunity for the community to mingle and speak with the police in a way that builds trust. Sometimes building trust within immigrant communities involves focusing on the family as a whole."

— Metropolitan Nashville community member

For many years in the Latino immigrant community in Nashville, print and broadcast media were the most reliable ways for law enforcement to share information with the community. The department, through its Latino outreach program El Protector, submitted articles on public safety concerns and crime prevention to the local Spanish newspapers and appeared as guests on Spanish radio programs. Over time, as the community grew larger and more connected to new media, the effectiveness of print outreach methods diminished.

Instead of dismantling their existing efforts, El Protector decided to take a closer look at its outreach activities to determine which activities were no longer adequate and which were successful and could be expanded. El Protector officers learned that the Latino community was relying less and less on print media, because either many were unable to read Spanish or could not make the time to read the paper on a regular basis. For these people, the radio was a more consistent medium for receiving news. Previously, El Protector officers would make only the occasional guest appearances on the radio. The department reasoned that with a more regular presence on Nashville's Spanish radio stations, they could have greater and more meaningful community contact. Currently, in addition to making appearances on four radio shows, El Protector officers now have a weekly radio program, "The El Protector Show." The program's topics range from domestic violence and traffic safety to immigration.

More recently, in response to the broad appeal of social networking media, the MNPD created an El Protector page on Facebook™, which features postings in English and in Spanish. Facebook has allowed the agency to reach Nashville's Latino youth, who are quite active online, and quickly publicize community events.

The immigrant communities have welcomed these initiatives, taking a more active role in working with police to ensure their safety. Most notably, the police have seen an increase in cooperation from immigrant victims and witnesses. This support has resulted in improved investigations and stronger prosecutions.

For more information about the El Protector program go to [www.police.nashville.gov/safety/elprotector/index.asp](http://www.police.nashville.gov/safety/elprotector/index.asp).



El Protector Officers answering questions on a live radio show. Metropolitan Nashville Police Department, January 2011.

### Additional Tips

- Is your police agency considering doing outreach to the immigrant community through radio and you want some advice from a seasoned expert?
- Are you interested in inviting a law enforcement official to participate in a radio program and want to create a format that works for everyone?

Listen to a podcast featuring a former El Protector officer from the Metropolitan Nashville Police Department to get practical answers to these questions and more. Listen/download the podcast at [www.cops.usdoj.gov](http://www.cops.usdoj.gov).

### Strategies to Ensure Community Engagement

Community leaders who have worked with the agencies profiled in this report offer the following suggestions for keeping community members engaged in police-immigrant relations programming.

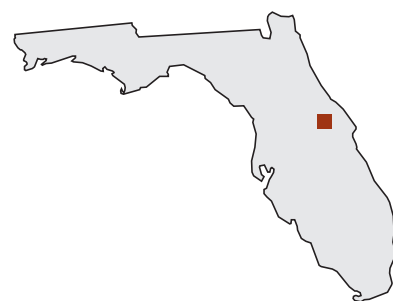
- Invite both leaders and members of the community to meetings with law enforcement to discuss needs, concerns, and problems.
- Allow community members to build their own agendas and strategies for working with police.
- Provide the community with information on the role of law enforcement, how law enforcement accepts and deals with resident complaints, and how it carries out community policing.
- Ensure that all meetings with community members occur in neutral locations that are accessible to community members and at dates and times that are conducive to specific community participation.
- Ensure that all materials are translated into languages predominant in the communities and that there are interpreters available at community meetings.
- Create an environment that is conducive to relationship-building by providing food.

"We did not want to be 'old school' in how we connected with the community. We wanted to think of new ways to improve service to the community and saw that an online presence and text messages can work well."

— Metropolitan Nashville Police Chief Steve Anderson

## Orange County Sheriff's Office

[www.ocso.com](http://www.ocso.com)



The Orange County Sheriff's Office's (OCSO) large jurisdiction, on the eastern coast of central Florida, is home to immigrants from across the globe, especially from South and Central America, Haiti, and other Caribbean countries. The OCSO realized that both new and settled immigrants in the county lacked information about the sheriff's office's role and responsibilities and needed an avenue to express

their concerns to the agency. Thus, the OCSO created tailored crime prevention academies and community advisory committees, which put into practice the eight principles for promising police-immigrant relations. In this report, we focus on two principles in which the OCSO:

- **Focused on the public safety and social services needs of vulnerable elderly Latino community members and LEP crime victims by creating crime prevention academies and recruiting a group of bilingual chaplains**
- **Created a Caribbean American Advisory Committee to solicit feedback from community leaders and monitor the sheriff's office's outreach efforts**

Data on crime in Orange County indicated that certain predatory activities, such as fraud, disproportionately affected the Latino immigrant community. Many new immigrants were routinely victimized; perpetrators would take advantage of their limited English proficiency and lack of awareness of ways to protect themselves from crime. To increase the Latino immigrant community's awareness of crime trends and crime prevention techniques, the OCSO instituted the Hispanic Crime Prevention Academy. Organized by the agency's Spanish-speaking victim-witness advocate, the Hispanic Crime Prevention Academy meets once a week for 8 weeks at a community location. Since 2001, the academy has trained hundreds of community members. Classes are conducted in Spanish and focus on a particular crime trend or public safety concern. Sworn OCSO personnel from various units lead each class and provide attendees with basic information about prevalent crimes, perpetrators' common ways of operating, and how to protect themselves.

Based on its positive experience with the Hispanic Crime Prevention Academy, the OCSO realized that elderly members of the Latino community were particularly susceptible to certain types of crime, such as identity theft. In addition to language and cultural barriers, elderly immigrants often have physical or mental challenges that can make them more vulnerable. In response, the OCSO started the Hispanic Senior Crime Prevention Academy in 2009 to address the public safety needs and concerns of senior citizens. The Hispanic Senior Crime Prevention Academy has empowered Orange County's older Latino residents by providing them with the knowledge and skills to be more vigilant in protecting themselves from unscrupulous people who are targeting their community. It has also provided many opportunities for meaningful face-to-face exchanges between the agency and community elders. These interactions give the department the chance to learn more about the needs of elderly Latino community members and allow the elderly to learn more about how police can help and protect them.

The sheriff's office recognized that while these crime prevention academies were a tremendous asset, they did not provide support services for immigrants who were victims of crime. The OCSO had an existing chaplaincy program, through which clergy of various faiths provided religious counseling and assistance to agency personnel and the community. The agency sought to expand this program to serve Orange County's immigrant community by recruiting bilingual clergy who, through faith-based organizations or houses of worship, were already serving large numbers of immigrants. The recruits are required to undergo the same application process as existing clergy in the chaplaincy program, which includes a written application, background check, proof of affiliation with a religious organization, and completion of OCSO training. In the training, clergy are taught about the role of police, how to provide death notifications, and how to assist victims and witnesses. By expanding their clergy pool to include bilingual clergy with ties to the immigrant community, the sheriff's office has been able to reach vulnerable groups during critical times of need.

**A copy of the schedule of the Orange County Sheriff's Office's Hispanic Senior Crime Prevention Academy can be found at [www.vera.org/epic](http://www.vera.org/epic).**



Sheriff Demings presenting a senior with a certificate of completion of the crime prevention academy. Orange County Sheriff's Office, January 2012.

### Citizens' Police Academies

Agencies profiled in this report host the following academies:

- Brooklyn Center and Brooklyn Park Police Departments: New Americans' Academy
- Chelsea Police Department: Citizens' Police Academy
- Everett Police Department: Junior Police Academy
- Metropolitan Nashville Police Department: Hispanic Teen Academy
- Orange County Sheriff's Office:
  - Clergy Academy
  - Hispanic Crime Prevention Academy
  - Hispanic Senior Crime Prevention Academy
  - Haitian Crime Prevention Academy

Curricula from some of these citizens' police academies can be found at [www.vera.org/epic](http://www.vera.org/epic).

The OCSO's jurisdiction is so large and diverse that sometimes the agency's ability to monitor and assess the effectiveness of its programs in every community it serves becomes compromised. During the Orange County Sheriff's election campaign, the current sheriff learned that members of the Caribbean community felt disengaged and believed they had little access to the agency's leadership. Despite the OCSO's many outreach efforts, some important community concerns—such as the rights of persons held in jail, proper procedure for traffic stops, and immigrants' rights—needed additional attention from the OCSO.

In order to remedy this situation, the OCSO created the Caribbean American Advisory Committee. Composed of respected community leaders, the committee meets regularly with the sheriff to share crime data, discuss the public safety needs of the county's Caribbean residents, and provide feedback on OSCO activities and programs to ensure they appropriately address these needs. In addition, the committee regularly hosts public events such as "Know Your Rights" trainings for the community and question-and-answer forums with representatives of several consulates. The sheriff and a number of agency personnel attend these events, which provide OCSO with additional opportunities to engage with members of their community.

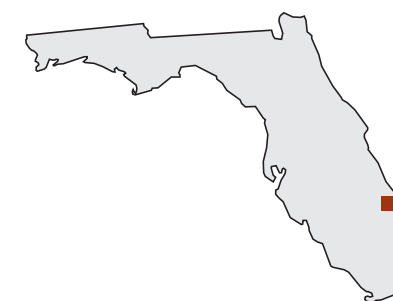
### Community Advisory Councils and Committees

Community advisory councils and committees allow residents to voice community concerns to their local law enforcement agency and provide feedback on the agency's policies and practices. The police departments in Brooklyn Center and Brooklyn Park, Chelsea, Clearwater, Everett, Metropolitan Nashville, and the Orange County Sheriff's Office all have advisory committees that meet regularly and are made up of civilians who represent different communities. Most of these committees require an application and vetting process. Some committees are mostly made up of prominent advocates or well-known leaders; others are open to a wider pool of residents. Some agencies, like the Orange County Sheriff's Office, have specific community advisory boards for different immigrant communities.

To learn more about community advisory councils and committees, including member roles and qualifications, go to [www.vera.org/epic](http://www.vera.org/epic).

## Palm Beach County Sheriff's Office

[www.pbso.org](http://www.pbso.org)



Palm Beach County, Florida, is home to large Latino and Caribbean immigrant populations. The Palm Beach Sheriff's Office (PBSO) observed several important public safety and crime prevention needs in these immigrant communities. Members of the Guatemalan-Mayan community were routinely targeted by robbers and failed to report and cooperate in criminal investigations. Immigrant youth were in need of

safe, positive after-school activities. And there was a persistent communications divide with the Haitian community. In response, the PBSO launched a number of community policing initiatives that embodied the eight principles for promising police-immigrant relations. In this report, we discuss how the PBSO has:

- **Hired a multilingual civilian community liaison to uncover the underlying reason** a specific segment of the Latino community were the target of the robberies
- **Partnered with public and private organizations** to create the Kids and Police Tennis Association (KAPTA), a free tennis program for immigrant and low-income youth that serves as a safe after-school activity and a crime prevention strategy
- **Initiated meaningful outreach** to the Haitian community by traveling to Haiti and working with the local community to provide relief in the aftermath of the 2010 earthquake
- **Formally monitored** the impact of the community liaison's outreach to the Guatemalan-Mayan community by engaging the assistance of a researcher from a local university

"Immigrants in Palm Beach County were becoming professional victims."

— Palm Beach County Sheriff Ric Bradshaw

### Get to the Root Causes

Crime data for the city of Lake Worth in Palm Beach County revealed that there were up to 30 robberies a month in the city, and the victims were often males from the Guatemalan-Mayan community. The victims were typically robbed while carrying large amounts of cash—often their weekly pay—in their pockets. Though the robberies were sometimes very violent, detectives were often left with little information to start an investigation because the victims and witnesses would not come forward or cooperate. As a result, such cases were not being prosecuted. Over time, it became well known among perpetrators that they could target this segment of the Lake Worth community without fear of law enforcement. The agency realized that it needed to understand better how to prevent these crimes in the first place and increase victim cooperation should a robbery happen.

Through a Smart Policing Initiative grant from the U.S. Department of Justice's Bureau of Justice Assistance, the PBSO hired a member of the Guatemalan-Mayan community who was fluent in the two predominant languages, Kanjobal (an indigenous language) and Spanish, to serve as a community liaison. This liaison was able to speak with residents who fit the victim profile to learn more about why they often carried so much cash on their person and would not cooperate with law enforcement should they be victimized. He learned that many community members believed that they could not open bank accounts if they did not have U.S. government-issued identification and thus saw no alternative to carrying large amounts of cash. Those who did not speak any English or have legal immigration status were also fearful of contact with law enforcement.

In response, the PBSO worked with local banks and the Guatemalan Consulate to increase the number of community members who had local bank accounts by assisting them in presenting sufficient identification and educating them about the crime prevention benefits of depositing their wages in the bank. The agency's community liaison, working closely with a robbery detective, also reached out to victims immediately after the initial crime report to explain, in Spanish or Kanjobal, the investigative process and the importance of their participation in it. The PBSO's targeted efforts to understand the Latino community's needs and concerns have begun to reduce the incidence of robberies perpetrated against Latino residents in Lake Worth.

### Leverage Partnerships

The sheriff's office saw the crime prevention potential of positive after-school activities for youth living in Palm Beach County communities that were plagued with high incidences of crime and disorder. One community policing deputy's interest in tennis led him to join the agency's Police Athletic League (PAL) program to start a free after-school tennis program. The funding, equipment, and space to pilot a youth tennis program came from a variety of sources, including the PBSO's Law Enforcement Trust—money collected from unclaimed and confiscated property—local retailers, and private donors. Despite limited advertising, 75 children and their families showed up on the first day to enroll; many of these participants were immigrants from countries in Latin America and the Caribbean. The tennis program is now called the Kids and Police Tennis Association, or KAPTA.

In less than one year, KAPTA has been able to provide comprehensive services—from tennis instruction and academic assistance, to nutrition and fitness education and crime prevention guidance. Many partners make this level of programming possible, including nearly a dozen national and local nonprofit organizations, eight national sporting goods companies, six major retailers, three local law firms, three local universities, and six world-renowned tennis instructors and players. KAPTA also receives funding and technical assistance for its academic assistance, mentoring, and crime prevention programs from both the local chapter and national office of the United States Tennis Association.

Parents of the participants report positive results from the program's comprehensive approach and are very appreciative for the guidance and support their children receive to avoid negative behaviors. PBSO deputies have also observed that program participants are more willing to report crimes. KAPTA currently boasts almost 300 regular participants, and is still expanding in Palm Beach County and beyond.

“In order for a partnership between two organizations to be successful, there has to be a win-win setup at the front end for both organizations.”

— Dan Limbago, national manager, United States Tennis Association National Junior Tennis and Learning

### Engage in Broad Outreach

When an earthquake ravaged much of Haiti in 2010, the devastation touched the large Haitian community in Palm Beach County (nearly 8,000 Haitians live in the city of Lake Worth alone). Still very much connected to family in Haiti, many of the county's Haitian residents were eager to help them. Before the disaster, the PBSO had made efforts to build relationships with the Haitian community, but there was a need to do more to improve relations. Following the earthquake, the PBSO saw an opportunity to join the local Haitian community in providing aid to relatives abroad while, at the same time, communicate the message that the sheriff's office seeks to support, protect, and serve all of the communities in its jurisdiction.

With a small grant from the Palm Beach County Police Benevolent Association and personal funds, a commander, sergeant, and two Haitian-American deputies of the sheriff's office traveled to Haiti—starting in Lake Worth's sister city Saint-Marc—to find out first-hand how the sheriff's office could assist with relief efforts. The PBSO representatives learned that medical supplies and resources for the Haitian National Police were most needed. Upon their return, they launched Operation Kenbe Fèm (which translates to “Hold Strong”) to solicit donations from the entire Palm Beach County community. The PBSO partnered with the American Jewish Committee and together they reached out to the media and sponsored fundraising events. They raised \$175,000 in funds and supplies to take back to Haiti, filling two large shipping containers with an operating table, two police cars, wheelchairs, and other needed items.

The PBSO's earthquake relief efforts became well known among Lake Worth's Haitian leaders and residents. In the view of many, the PBSO had gone above and beyond the call of duty. As a result, sheriff deputies have noted that the Haitian community is more welcoming of and responsive to law enforcement. In addition, the agency's mindset changed as a result of the relief efforts; those in the agency who traveled to Haiti came back with a better understanding of Haitian culture and traditions—knowledge that now informs the agency's interactions with the community and has led to more culturally-appropriate practices.

“KAPTA teaches kids to see police as people who help the community, who deserve respect, and it teaches them that they shouldn't be afraid. This is especially important for Latino children and families.”

— Parent of KAPTA participant



Agency staff that launched Operation Kenbe Fèm. Palm Beach County Sheriff's Office, June 2010.

### Monitor Successes and Failures

After the Palm Beach County Sheriff's Office hired its civilian community liaison to improve police relations with the Latino community and reduce the number of robberies perpetrated against members of this community, the sheriff's office wanted to know whether the community liaison's outreach efforts were meeting the overall goals of the Smart Policing Initiative, which was funding their efforts.

Although the Smart Policing Initiative required a partnership with an outside academic researcher, the PBSO was itself open to have an independent evaluator for its project because it would provide the agency with an impartial analysis of the program's successes and failures. PBSO decided to partner with researchers from a local university in Palm Beach County. The researchers created a methodology to monitor the program by tracking community contacts and outreach events, and comparing community resident perceptions and crime reporting to a similar district in the jurisdiction that did not have a designated community liaison.

To track the activities of the community liaison and his interactions with members of the Latino community, the researchers reviewed the community liaison's weekly reports to come up with an activity log for the liaison to document systematically each of his activities and the amount of time he took to complete the work. This information would then inform the agency's review of the community liaison's workload and efficiency and help determine the sustainability of the program.

The researchers selected a comparison (or control) district that closely resembled Lake Worth in terms of demographics and crime patterns. The researchers then developed surveys to gauge community perceptions of crime and interactions with law enforcement for Latino (predominantly Guatemalan-Mayan) residents of Lake Worth and the comparison district. The community liaison and research assistants disseminated the surveys to Latino immigrants in both districts, who were asked to complete them anonymously. Finally, the researchers worked with the agency's crime analysts to review crime data in both Lake Worth and the comparison district to note any increases in crime reporting by members of the immigrant community.

These monitoring activities provided the sheriff's office with up-to-date and accurate data about their project's performance. The agency has found changes in community attitudes and satisfaction towards law enforcement, which are reflected in survey data and manifested in the increase of Latino residents coming to the sheriff's office to meet with the community liaison. This includes Guatemalan women, who seek advice about, and report, domestic violence and other familial concerns. The PBSO's monitoring shows that compared to the control district, there has been a substantial decrease in robberies and increase in arrests in Lake Worth. This contemporaneous feedback has enabled the PBSO to continue its project activities because it is meeting the project goals.

“Look for strategic opportunities that can build trust. Always do what you are obliged to do and then do something extraordinary.”

— Captain Rolando Silva, Palm Beach County Sheriff's Office

### The Palm Beach Sheriff's Office Evaluation Strategy

The Palm Beach Sheriff's Office, together with its academic research partner, has adopted the following process to ensure that the program evaluation is data-driven:

1. Collect baseline data and develop realistic performance and outcome indicators.
2. Conduct “pre” and “post” program surveys to measure changes in knowledge among the target population.
3. Identify and discuss challenges, successes, and other issues in quarterly progress reports.
4. Measure success by the decrease in robberies.
5. Measure success by the increase in the number of robberies reported by victims.

For more information, see the PBSO's Smart Policing Initiative's Project Plan at [www.smartpolicinginitiative.com/SPIsites/palm-beach-florida](http://www.smartpolicinginitiative.com/SPIsites/palm-beach-florida).

### Additional Tips

- What should law enforcement look for in an outside research partner?
- When should a research partner get involved in a police-community relations project?

Listen to a podcast featuring the senior executive staff officer for the Department of Law Enforcement Operations and Community Operations in the Palm Beach County Sheriff's Office to get practical answers to these questions and more. Listen/download the podcast at [www.cops.usdoj.gov](http://www.cops.usdoj.gov).

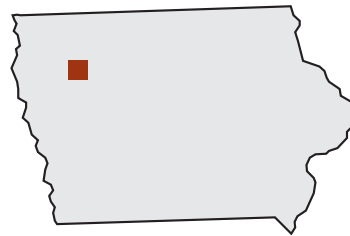
“Grants start things. It's an easy way to kick it off. Monitor it well and then continue.”

— Palm Beach County Sheriff Ric Bradshaw



## Storm Lake Police Department

[www.stormlake.org/index.aspx?NID=173](http://www.stormlake.org/index.aspx?NID=173)



As employment opportunities increased because of the expansion of local industry, many immigrants began to work and settle in Storm Lake, Iowa. Twenty-four languages are spoken in this small rural community. The shift in demographics in Storm Lake is best evidenced when looking at the public school population. In the past year,

nearly 82 percent of the students enrolled in the elementary school grades were non-Caucasian. The Latino and Laotian communities are among the largest groups. When the immigrants from these communities settled in different neighborhoods throughout the city, the Storm Lake Police Department (SLPD) had to find new and efficient ways to respond to crime and curb the underreporting of crime. With just 19 sworn officers to protect and serve nearly 13,000 residents, the department had to make sure to use its resources efficiently. The SLPD's response to the changing demographics incorporates the eight principles of promising practices for police-immigrant relations. In this report, we discuss how the SLPD:

- **Maximizes its resources** by deploying the mobile command unit with bilingual officers and community resource officers to the immigrant neighborhoods from which the majority of calls for service come
- **Focuses on vulnerable immigrant crime victims** by making them aware of immigration relief available to those who are helpful to law enforcement, thereby encouraging immigrant crime victims to report crime

### Maximize Resources

An analysis of the Storm Lake Police Department's calls for service data revealed that the largest number of calls came from the four neighborhoods in which the majority of the city's Laotian and Latino immigrants live. The analysis also revealed that officers were making several trips per week to the same locations, and that there was a need for a more sustained police presence in these neighborhoods.

The SLPD has a mobile command unit that the department only used for special events. However, as a result of the calls for service analysis, the SLPD decided to expand the use of the mobile command unit by dispatching it to Laotian and Latino neighborhoods, where it could serve as a temporary substation. The department piloted the program over the course of a summer, alternately parking the mobile command unit in each of the four neighborhoods for 2 to 3 hours during the evening when the department typically received the largest number of calls for service.

Each evening, the temporary substation attracts about 50 to 150 community members. Several police department personnel are present at the temporary substation, including the police chief or assistant chief, the night shift supervisor, the on-duty sector patrol officer, and a bilingual civilian community service officer. Staffs of other government agencies, such as the fire department and social service agencies, are present to provide additional services or community outreach. By working out of a neighborhood-based substation, officers are able to respond quickly to emerging issues and make face-to-face contact with many more community members. As a result of this increased contact, some residents have come forward to report crimes and public safety concerns that they would never have reported by calling 911 or traveling to police headquarters. By using data to prioritize the allocation of limited resources, the SLPD has been able to respond to a greater number of the city's crimes and public safety threats in an efficient and responsive manner.

"One evening while our mobile command vehicle was out in the community, one Hmong resident reported that a young Hmong man was ill in an apartment. Officers checked on the young man and learned that he had been lying ill in bed for over a week and the family did not know how to help him. The man was immediately transported to a hospital and was treated. We're confident that the family would not have sought out assistance if we were not standing in their neighborhood. We believe a fatality was averted that evening."

— Storm Lake Public Safety Director Mark Prosser



Mobile command with sworn officers, preparing for deployment in a local neighborhood. Storm Lake Police Department, July 2011.

### Focus on the Vulnerable

Perpetrators of crime were preying on newly settled immigrants in Storm Lake, many of whom spoke little or no English, because these immigrants did not understand the law, feared immigration enforcement, and were not reporting crime. As a result, immigrants were increasingly becoming victims of robberies, violent assaults, and domestic violence.

Although the SLPD knew immigrants were being victimized based on crime data, it was through community members' informal reports that the department recognized why there was a great deal of unreported crime. The department learned, for example, that perpetrators of domestic violence would often tell immigrant victims that the police deport immigrants who report crime. Even for some immigrant victims who had the courage to report crime, the fear of deportation ultimately interfered with their cooperation in prosecutions.

The SLPD concluded that the immigrant community, victims in particular, needed information about what constitutes a crime in the United States and how to report criminal activity. Moreover, immigrant victims needed reassurance that reporting crimes would not make them vulnerable to deportation. To guide its approach to providing this assurance, the department sought the help of local immigration attorneys and national immigration experts. In doing so, the department became familiar with the U visa status, which is an immigration benefit available to some immigrant victims of crime.

The SLPD wanted to leverage the public safety value of this visa status and educate Storm Lake's immigrant community about the potential immigration benefit for crime victims. The SLPD created a brochure about the U visa in Spanish and English, which states the department's commitment to working with all victims of crime to ensure their safety and explains how to safely report a crime. The brochure—available at city hall, libraries, and other public locations—has assisted the police department in reaching a highly vulnerable segment of the immigrant community.

As a result of SLPD's initiatives to incorporate the U visa in their efforts to protect immigrant victims of crime, the department has been able to have greater success in criminal investigations and prosecutions involving immigrant victims and achieve lower crime rates throughout the city.

**A copy of the SLPD's U visa brochure, available in Spanish and English, can be found on Vera's website at [www.vera.org/epic](http://www.vera.org/epic).**

#### Interested in learning more about the U visa?

Congress created the "U" nonimmigrant status, or U visa, in October of 2000 when it passed the Victims of Trafficking and Violence Protection Act. The U visa provides a way for undocumented victims of violent crime who are helpful to law enforcement in the detection, investigation, or prosecution of the criminal activities to apply to remain legally in the United States. By addressing immigrant victims' fears of reporting crime and working with law enforcement, the U visa strengthens the ability of police agencies to fight crime and cultivate trust.

You can learn more about the U visa online:  
National Immigrant Victims' Access to Justice Partnership:  
[www.vera.org/project/immigrant-victims-access](http://www.vera.org/project/immigrant-victims-access)

U.S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS)'s U visa Law Enforcement Certification Resource Guide:  
[www.dhs.gov/files/resources/u-visa-law-enforcement-guide.shtm](http://www.dhs.gov/files/resources/u-visa-law-enforcement-guide.shtm)

"The work around the U visa has helped the police department build its relationship with the immigrant community."

— Justin Yarosevich,  
Storm Lake  
assistant city  
manager



Laotian Storm Lake Residents attending annual festival co-sponsored by the police department. Storm Lake Police Department, July 2011.

## Tulsa Police Department

[www.tulsapolice.org](http://www.tulsapolice.org)



The manufacturing industry in Tulsa, Oklahoma, has drawn a large Latino immigrant population, the majority of who are Mexican immigrants. Many of these immigrants speak Spanish and are not proficient in English. Because they had few Spanish-speaking officers, the Tulsa Police Department (TPD) experienced difficulties communicating with and responding to the needs of its immigrant population.

To overcome these challenges, the department created a Hispanic Outreach Program staffed with a bilingual Hispanic liaison sergeant and officer. The Hispanic Outreach Program effectively puts into practice all eight principles of promising police-immigrant relations. In this report, we highlight how through its Hispanic Outreach Program, the TPD:

- Provides additional services with the same amount of resources by expanding the duties of their bilingual volunteers to allow them to interpret for police officers during routine police operations
- Implemented an effective broad outreach strategy by going door-to-door in the immigrant community, organizing community forums in faith-based institutions, and clarifying the agency's policy on immigration enforcement
- Incorporates tactical Spanish-language and cultural training into its police academy curriculum and officer training requirements

The Tulsa Police Department serves a large Spanish-speaking community that is limited English proficient. Language barriers may lead to miscommunication between the police and community members, which can not only be frustrating when trying to resolve a situation, but escalate to aggression on the part of the civilian or the officer. The TPD had employed a few bilingual officers, but these officers were not able to handle all of the interactions with Spanish-speaking residents. After the agency experienced budget cuts that led to decreases in the number of patrol officers able to respond to calls for service, the few bilingual officers became even less available to assist with interactions with Spanish-speaking residents.

The department then turned to their existing Volunteer in Policing Services (VIPS) program to seek out bilingual volunteers who could serve as Spanish-English interpreters for the police department. Interpreter applicants must complete a lengthy application process, pass a background check, and affirm that they will adhere to the agency's confidentiality requirements.

The volunteer interpreters are only able to provide language assistance during initial calls for service, as they are not certified to testify in court. To date, the department has added 14 volunteer positions for these interpreters. These volunteer interpreters ride along with officers in the Mingo-Valley precinct, which has the greatest number of Spanish-speaking residents. With their assistance, officers are better equipped to respond quickly to calls for service and assess situations with greater accuracy. The volunteer interpreters have also been well received by the Spanish-speaking community because they have helped community members receive appropriate assistance in emotionally-charged or emergency situations.

### How to Register with VIPS

If your agency has a volunteer program, you may want to consider registering it with Volunteers In Police Service (VIPS). The benefits of registering with VIPS include:

- A page on the VIPS website dedicated to your program
- Networking opportunities with other registered VIPS programs
- An opportunity to participate in VIPS to VIPS, a moderated discussion group for volunteer program leaders
- Eligibility to apply for the Award for Outstanding Volunteer Programs
- Recognition of your status by the International Association of Chiefs of Police and the U.S. Department of Justice
- Grant funding opportunities (Some states require registration with VIPS to be eligible for federal grant funding opportunities.)

To register your volunteer program and find out more about VIPS, go to [www.policevolunteers.org](http://www.policevolunteers.org).

### Engage in Broad Outreach

Law enforcement agencies in the state of Oklahoma have differing policies for enforcing immigration laws. In Tulsa, the TPD does not have a formal partnership with federal immigration officials to identify and detain immigrants in its custody who do not have lawful status. This is in contrast to their county sheriff's office policy and some other local law enforcement agencies in the state.

When the TPD began to reach out to the Latino immigrant community through its Hispanic outreach liaison—a sworn bilingual officer—the liaison quickly learned that the community feared contacts with the TPD because members did not know or understand the TPD's policies and believed the agency was enforcing immigration law. The liaison realized that he needed to make as many face-to-face contacts with community members as possible to gain their trust and communicate TPD's policies and priorities.

The liaison embarked on a multifaceted outreach approach that began very simply—he went door-to-door to introduce himself and the TPD's Hispanic Outreach Program, and to distribute literature about the program and the department. He went to local businesses and posted Spanish-English posters and flyers with safety tips, names of local organizations that both served the immigrant community and partnered with the TPD, and the phone number for the department's Spanish-language hotline. The liaison also became a regular presence in bilingual media outlets that reached a broad spectrum of the immigrant community and he reached out to youth organizations to locate Latino youth he could mentor and educate about the role of law enforcement.

As the liaison raised his profile throughout the community, he also worked with religious leaders to plan community forums at houses of worship, where community members felt safe enough to ask questions about the role of the TPD in immigration enforcement. The police chief attended these forums to speak about the agency's policies related to

“We provide LEP persons with a huge relief—we assist with live interpretation, which allows the caller to communicate freely and know that he or she will be understood.”

— Tulsa Police Department VIPS volunteer

immigrants. Officers assigned to the area also attended the forum, so that community members could meet and interact with the officers who were in the community keeping neighborhoods safe. By making both individual and large-group appearances in the Latino community, the liaison has been effective in dispelling myths about the TPD's immigration policies and opening channels for future communication and collaboration between the department and the community.

### The Six Pillars of Tulsa's Hispanic Outreach Program

1. Disseminate community surveys.
2. Conduct police and community education.
3. Create a police liaison to the Hispanic community.
4. Conduct outreach through multiple media outlets.
5. Add Spanish interpreters to VIPS Program.
6. Host a Spanish telephone helpline.

For a detailed look at each of the six pillars of Tulsa Police Department Hispanic Outreach Program, go to Vera's website at [www.vera.org/epic](http://www.vera.org/epic).

### Train Law Enforcement and the Community

Despite efforts to maximize their limited bilingual resources, non-bilingual officers still have to respond to calls with Spanish speakers. Understandably, in these encounters, language barriers can cause frustration and even disproportionate aggression between the officers and the people with limited English proficiency. To reduce the communication challenges that can lead to unsafe encounters, the department turned to training.

The TPD recognized that maintaining control in escalating encounters was essential to officer and civilian safety. For this reason, the department decided to translate commonly used English commands into Spanish and teach officers how to use these commands to stabilize high-stress interactions, until a Spanish interpreter can arrive on the scene to assist. To put these phrases in context, the department provided information about the Latino cultures in Tulsa. The TPD also made the language training a mandatory part of its police academy curriculum and simulation training, and required that it be repeated thereafter every 2 years. The simulation training teaches cadets and officers to effectively control a scene that includes an agitated group of people who are speaking only Spanish—an accurate depiction of what officers might encounter on a call. Cadets and officers have to use one or more of the Spanish-language commands to control the scene.

This language instruction and simulation training provide the TPD officers who do not speak Spanish with practical tools that they can use in the field. Officers who have received this training feel better prepared to respond to calls with Spanish speakers and are equipped to retain control until a bilingual officer, civilian personnel, or volunteer can arrive on the scene and provide language assistance. This diffuses frustrations and averts dangers to officers and civilians that arise from language barriers.

Tulsa Police Department's Spanish translations of commonly-used commands are available at [www.vera.org/epic](http://www.vera.org/epic).

### Additional Tips

- How can language instruction be incorporated into tactical training for police?
- How can training on working with the immigrant community go beyond the textbook?

Listen to a podcast featuring the Hispanic outreach liaison officer from the Tulsa Police Department to get practical answers to these questions and more. Listen/download the podcast at [www.cops.usdoj.gov](http://www.cops.usdoj.gov).

“At the local level, we are the ones who deal with Hispanic victims of crime. There is nothing impersonal about that. We need to help, and we can't help and protect them if they are fearful of us.”

— Deputy Chief Daryl Webster, Tulsa Police Department

## Conclusion

This report describes a variety of approaches to building and maintaining effective police-immigrant relations developed by a diverse group of law enforcement agencies. Other agencies may not have the resources or staff to replicate these practices exactly as presented. However, the principles embraced by profiled agencies provide a framework for any other agency to use when adapting what has worked elsewhere to local realities. From getting to root causes to sustaining programs that work, the principles identified in this report can help police agencies across the nation move closer to their common goal: improving public safety.

### Police-Immigrant Relations: Strategies for Getting Started

Personnel from the 10 profiled agencies in this report offered the following suggestions for how to get started in serving immigrant communities. These strategies may be initially carried out for as little time as 2 hours a week.

- Identify the needs of the community by visiting local businesses, restaurants, and community-based organizations.
- Reach out to faith-based organizations and religious institutions, meet with religious leaders to learn about community needs, and ask for permission to speak to and assist parishioners with their public safety concerns.
- Sustain trust and good relationships by regularly following up with community contacts.
- Organize ongoing community events such as community forums, trainings, and festivals.
- Involve the police chief, sheriff, or other agency executives in community outreach activities.
- Provide the community with access to police liaisons by disseminating their contact information widely.
- Use media and social networking technology to reach out to the community, including radio, TV, ethnic newspapers, video, Facebook, and Twitter™.
- Evaluate the effectiveness of community outreach by monitoring the number of community contacts police liaisons make each quarter.
- Cultivate in-house language resources by identifying and testing bilingual civilian staff and sworn officers who can assist in communicating with residents with limited English proficiency.

“It is important to educate and not shame our workforce and make this information seem useful to them.”

— Deputy Chief Daryl Webster, Tulsa Police Department

## EPIC Glossary

**Bilingual:** Able to speak two languages fluently.

**Human Trafficking:** A worldwide form of exploitation affecting men, women, and children. This includes acts involved in the recruitment, abduction, transport, harboring, transfer, sale, or receipt of persons through force, coercion, fraud, or deception to place persons in situations of forced labor or services, forced prostitution or sexual services, domestic servitude, bonded sweatshop labor, or other debt bondage. These acts can occur within national or across international borders.

**Immigrant:** A person who leaves one country to settle in another. Motives for immigration can include economic, religious, political, or social factors. In this report, people are immigrants if they are foreign born and are living in the United States with or without legal immigration status.

**Limited English Proficient (LEP):** A person is LEP if his or her native language is not English and he or she can only partially speak, read, write, or understand English.

**Refugee:** A person who flees to a foreign country to escape danger or persecution. Refugees selected for relocation to the United States are relocated by refugee resettlement agencies.

**Resident:** A person who lives in a building, area, or jurisdiction. In this report, resident is not used to describe or suggest anyone's legal status in the United States.

**Sanctuary city:** A term given to a municipality that does not allow municipal funds or resources to be used to enforce federal immigration laws. In these localities, police are not permitted to inquire about a person's immigration status during routine police operations or stop or question people solely because an officer believes that they may not have lawful immigration status.

**T visa:** The T visa is a temporary visa for victims of human trafficking who assist law enforcement in the investigation or prosecution of human trafficking. These trafficking victims must demonstrate that they would suffer extreme hardship involving unusual and severe harm if they were to be removed from the United States and also meet other federal statutory requirements. The T visa application includes an optional form to be completed by a law enforcement agency that provides evidence that the applicant is a victim of trafficking and has complied with reasonable requests for assistance from law enforcement.

**U visa:** The U visa is a temporary visa that immigrant victims of crime can receive if they are helpful to law enforcement in the detection, investigation, or prosecution of the criminal activities they experienced and meet other federal statutory requirements. It strengthens the ability of law enforcement agencies to fight crime and cultivate trust by addressing immigrant victims' fears of reporting crime and working with law enforcement. Applicants for the U visa must include a certification, which can be signed by federal, state, or other local law enforcement agencies. U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) decides whether to grant or deny U visas. (More information about law enforcement use of the U visa can be found at [www.vera.org/project/immigrant-victims-access](http://www.vera.org/project/immigrant-victims-access).)

## EPIC Toolkit

Visit Vera's website at [www.vera.org/epic](http://www.vera.org/epic) to access resources gathered from the 10 profiled agencies on the following topics:

### Citizens' Police Academies

New Americans' Academy program information and lesson plan	Brooklyn Center and Brooklyn Park PDs
Pre-test and post-test given to New Americans' Academy participants	Brooklyn Center and Brooklyn Park PDs
Citizens' Police Academy weekly schedule	Chelsea PD
Hispanic Teen Academy weekly schedule	Metropolitan Nashville PD
Clergy Academy weekly schedule	Orange County Sheriff's Office
Hispanic Crime Prevention Academy brochure	Orange County Sheriff's Office
Hispanic Crime Prevention Academy weekly schedule	Orange County Sheriff's Office
Hispanic Senior Crime Prevention Academy brochure (SPANISH)	Orange County Sheriff's Office
Hispanic Senior Crime Prevention Academy weekly schedule (SPANISH)	Orange County Sheriff's Office

### Community Advisory Councils and Committees

Description of the role of the Multicultural Advisory Committee	Brooklyn Center and Brooklyn Park PDs
Application for a position with the Multicultural Advisory Committee	Brooklyn Center and Brooklyn Park PDs
Issues identified as priorities by the Multicultural Advisory Committee	Brooklyn Center and Brooklyn Park PDs

### Community Education on Laws and Police Practices

Age of consent laws brochure (ENGLISH and SPANISH)	Clearwater PD
Clearwater/Tampa Bay Area Task Force on Human Trafficking brochure	Clearwater PD
"What to Expect when Stopped by the Police" brochure	Everett PD
"What to Expect when Stopped by the Police" brochure (ARABIC)	Everett PD
"What to Expect when Stopped by the Police" brochure (HAITIAN CREOLE)	Everett PD
"What to Expect when Stopped by the Police" brochure (ITALIAN)	Everett PD
"What to Expect when Stopped by the Police" brochure (PORTUGUESE)	Everett PD
"What to Expect when Stopped by the Police" brochure (SPANISH)	Everett PD
Economic Crimes Prevention brochure for senior citizens (SPANISH)	Orange County Sheriff's Office
Brochure explaining the U visa	Storm Lake PD
Brochure explaining the U visa (SPANISH)	Storm Lake PD
"Tulsa Police is not ICE" brochure (SPANISH)	Tulsa PD

### Community Feedback

Survey for members of the Multicultural Advisory Committee	Brooklyn Center and Brooklyn Park PDs
Survey for Limited English Proficient individuals (ENGLISH and SPANISH)	Tulsa PD

## Community Outreach

Outreach activities planned by the Joint Community Policing Partnership	Brooklyn Center and Brooklyn Park PDs
Letter to residents on police efforts to work with the Liberian community	Brooklyn Center and Brooklyn Park PDs
Outreach activities organized and attended by the Newcomer Advocate	Chelsea PD
Door tags with safety tips for business owners (ENGLISH and SPANISH)	Clearwater PD
Hispanic Festival flyer	Metropolitan Nashville PD
Hispanic Festival flyer (SPANISH)	Metropolitan Nashville PD
Diagram of outreach planned by the Hispanic Outreach Program	Tulsa PD
Narrative recounting Haiti relief efforts	Palm Beach County Sheriff's Office
Community Event listing	Palm Beach County Sheriff's Office

## Job Descriptions

Community Liaison job description	Brooklyn Center and Brooklyn Park PDs
Police Cadets roles and responsibilities	Brooklyn Center and Brooklyn Park PDs
EI Protector Officer job description	Metropolitan Nashville PD
Cricket Volunteer Spanish interpreters criteria	Metropolitan Nashville PD
Community Outreach Liaison job description	Palm Beach County Sheriff's Office

## Law Enforcement Training

Fact sheet on the Eritrean immigrant community	Chelsea PD
Training curriculum for interpreters	Clearwater PD
Diversity Awareness instruction for officers lesson plan	Metropolitan Nashville PD
Diversity Awareness instruction for supervisors lesson plan	Metropolitan Nashville PD
Command Spanish instruction for law enforcement lesson plan	Metropolitan Nashville PD
Basic Spanish instruction for law enforcement lesson plan	Orange County Sheriff's Office
Hispanic Outreach presentation for police academy participants	Tulsa PD
27 Spanish Phrases for Law Enforcement	Tulsa PD
U visa presentation for officers	Tulsa PD

## Policies and Procedures

"SARA: Scan Analysis Response Assessment" report on Liberian parties	Brooklyn Center and Brooklyn Park PDs
Enforcement of Federal Immigration Laws policy	Chelsea PD
Consular Notification, Access, and Arrest and Detention of Foreign Nationals in Police Custody policy	Chelsea PD
Verizon Language Line policy	Chelsea PD
Civilian Interpreter Program policy	Clearwater PD
Racial, Religious, and Ethnic Violence policy	Clearwater PD
Hispanic Outreach Center policy and procedures	Clearwater PD
Hispanic Outreach Center's creation and procedures presentation	Clearwater PD
Interpreter Services-Cell Phone Translators and Language Line General Order	Metropolitan Nashville PD
EI Protector Program standard operating procedures	Metropolitan Nashville PD
Interpreters and Related Services policy	Palm Beach County Sheriff's Office
Limited English Proficient individuals policy	Tulsa PD

## Podcasts

Listen to or download the following seven podcasts accompanying this report on The Beat podcast series at [www.cops.usdoj.gov](http://www.cops.usdoj.gov):

1. Tips from a police community liaison on getting the trust and support of multilingual communities and sworn officers. Monique Drier, Community Liaison, Brooklyn Center Police Department.
2. Practical tips for doing outreach to multicultural communities. Robin Martinson, Community Liaison, Brooklyn Park Police Department.
3. Working with the community in addressing sensitive topics. Brian Kyes, Chief of Police, Chelsea Police Department.
4. Ensuring continuity in community policing initiatives during police agency transitions. Sergio Fidelis, Police Officer, Clearwater Police Department.
5. Effectively using radio for community outreach. Rafael Fernandez, Sergeant, Metropolitan Nashville Police Department.
6. Tips for selecting a good research partner. James Stormes, Colonel, Palm Beach County Sheriff's Office.
7. Practical foreign language instruction for officers. Jesse Guardiola, Police Officer, Tulsa Police Department.

## Additional Resources

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## Funding Resources

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Grants.gov [www.grants.gov](http://www.grants.gov)

The U.S. Department of Justice, Bureau of Justice Assistance  
<https://www.bja.gov/funding.aspx>

The U.S. Department of Justice, Office of Community Oriented Policing Services [www.cops.usdoj.gov](http://www.cops.usdoj.gov)

MetLife Foundation Community-Police Partnership Awards Program  
[www.lisc.org/section/ourwork/national/safety/awards](http://www.lisc.org/section/ourwork/national/safety/awards)

Smart Policing Initiative [www.smartpolicinginitiative.com/background](http://www.smartpolicinginitiative.com/background)

Volunteers in Police Service (VIPS) [www.policevolunteers.org](http://www.policevolunteers.org)

## Appendix

### National Trends

This section consists of figures that illustrate trends and attributes of the 175 agencies that completed Vera's Engaging Police in Immigrant Communities Promising Practices National Assessment in 2011.

#### Characteristics of Law Enforcement Agency Respondents

**Figure 1:** Number of Respondent Agencies by State

**Figure 2:** Type and Size of Respondent Agencies

**Figure 3:** Total Number of Respondent Agencies by Immigrant Populations in Their Jurisdictions

**Figure 4:** Percent of Respondent Agencies' Jurisdictions with Influx of Immigrants in Past Five Years

**Figure 5:** Topics of Policies and Directives of Respondent Agencies for Serving the Immigrant Community

#### Assessing Needs and Building upon Existing Models

**Figure 6:** Did Your Agency Conduct a Needs Assessment Before Starting Its Program?

**Figure 7:** Did Your Agency Build Upon an Existing Model?

**Figure 8:** Did Immigrant Communities Provide Input During the Development of the Program?

#### Outreach Efforts to the Immigrant Community and Evaluation

**Figure 9:** Does Your Agency Conduct Outreach in Substations and Local Precincts?

**Figure 10:** Does Your Agency Conduct Outreach at Immigrant Community Events?

**Figure 11:** Does Your Agency Conduct Outreach through Ethnic Media Outlets?

**Figure 12:** Has Your Agency Evaluated Its Services to Immigrant Communities or Involved the Immigrant Community in Evaluating Its Services?

#### Law Enforcement Services to Ensure Access to Limited English Proficient Individuals

**Figure 13:** Agency Resources for Communicating with Limited English Proficient Individuals

**Figure 14:** Languages Spoken by Bilingual Officers

**Figure 15:** Does Your Agency Provide Incentives to Bilingual Personnel?

**Figure 16:** Does Your Agency Assign Bilingual Officers to Areas with Large Limited English Proficient Populations?

**Figure 17:** Does Your Agency Provide or Pay for Language Instruction?

**Figure 18:** Types of Foreign Language Instruction Offered by Respondent Agencies

#### Law Enforcement Training Initiatives

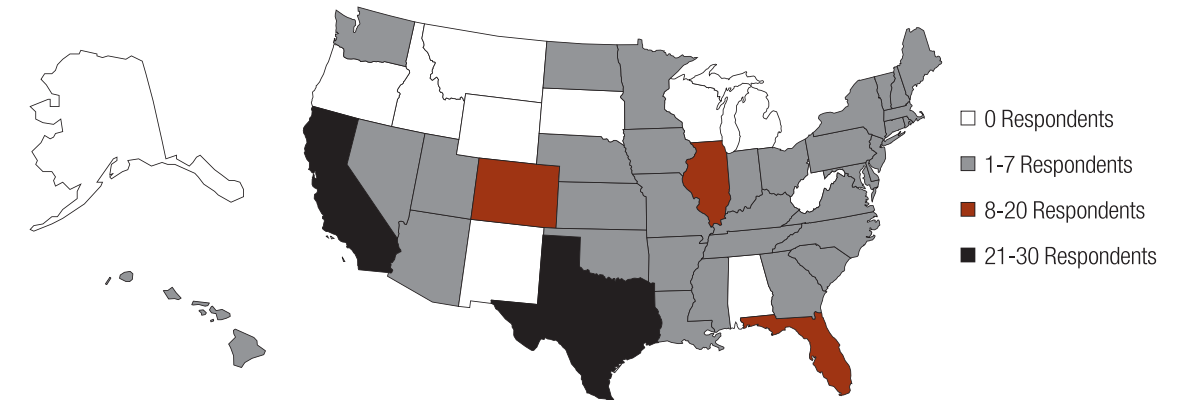
**Figure 19:** Does Your Agency Train Law Enforcement Personnel on Serving Immigrants?

**Figure 20:** Does Your Agency Invite Immigrants to Train Law Enforcement Personnel?

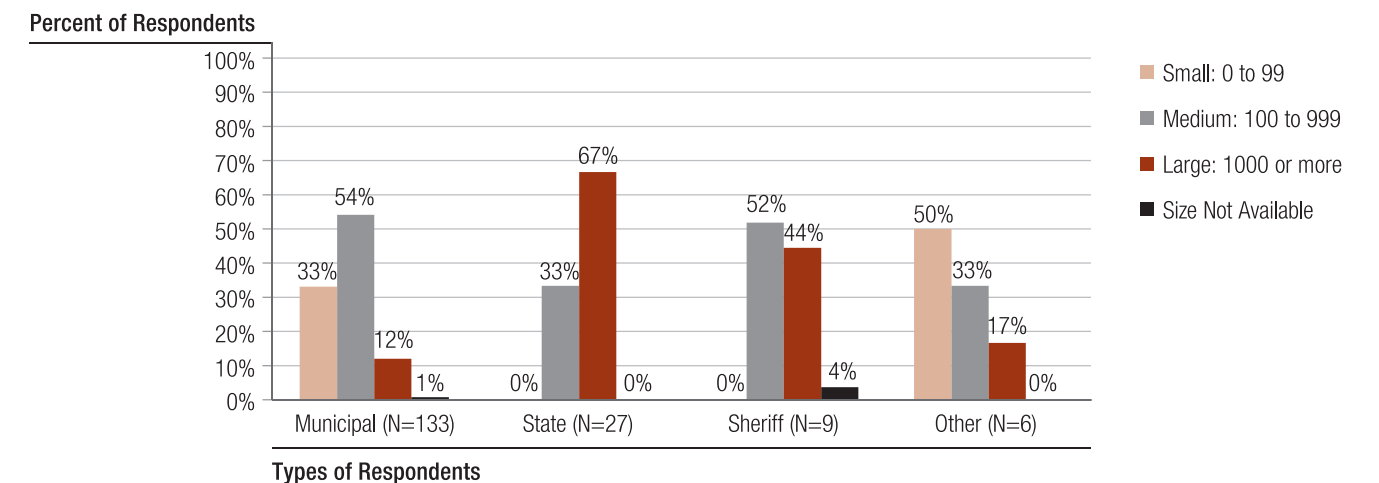
**Figure 21:** Does Your Agency Train Immigrants on How to Interact with the Police?

## Characteristics of Law Enforcement Agency Respondents

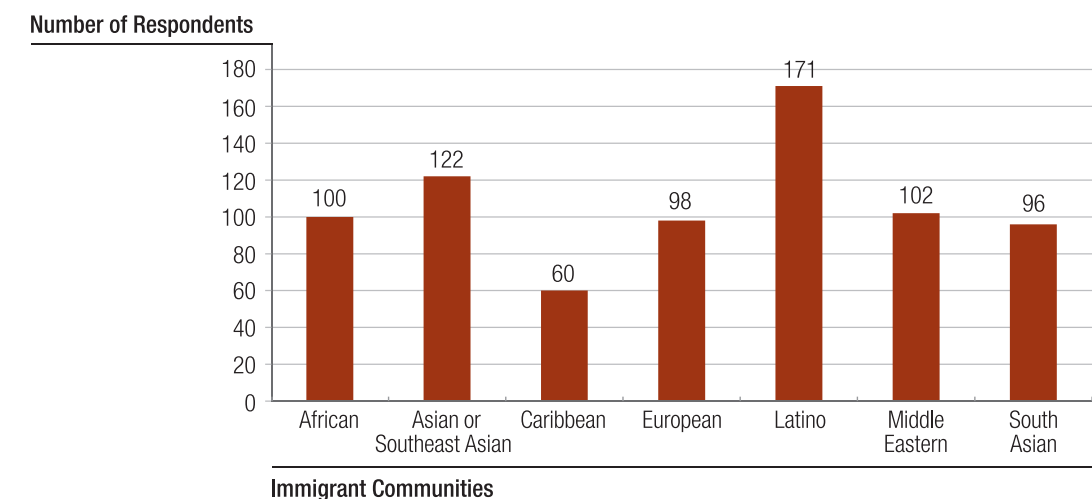
**Figure 1.** Number of Respondent Agencies by State (N=175)



**Figure 2.** Type and Size of Respondent Agencies (N=175)

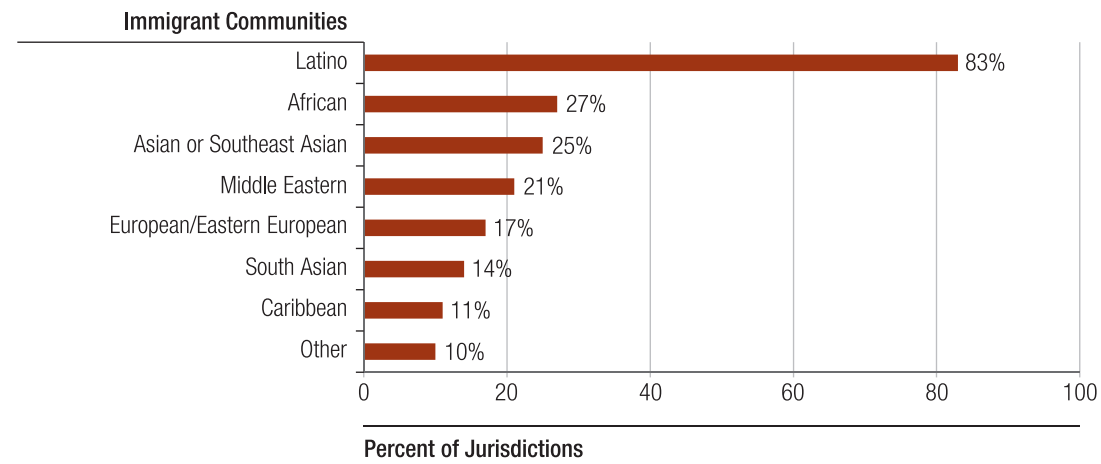


**Figure 3.** Total Number of Respondent Agencies by Immigrant Populations in Their Jurisdictions (N=175)

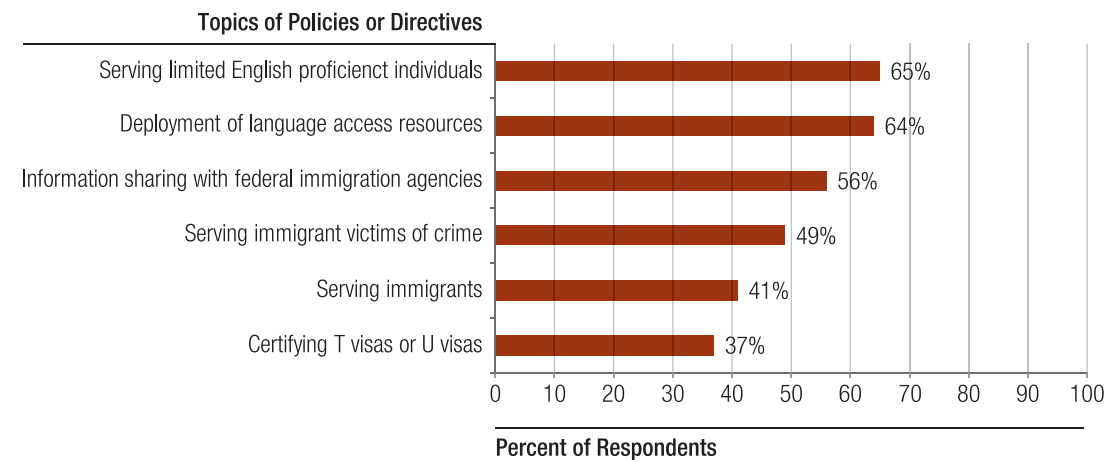


### Characteristics of Law Enforcement Agency Respondents

**Figure 4.** Percent of Respondent Agencies' Jurisdictions with Influx of Immigrants in Past Five Years (N=146)

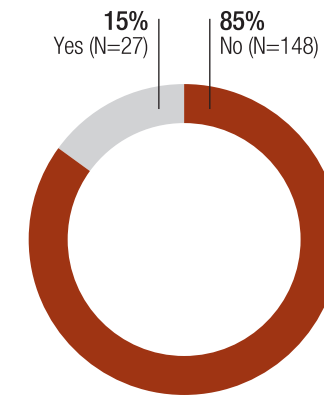


**Figure 5.** Topics of Policies and Directives of Respondent Agencies for Serving the Immigrant Community (N=116)

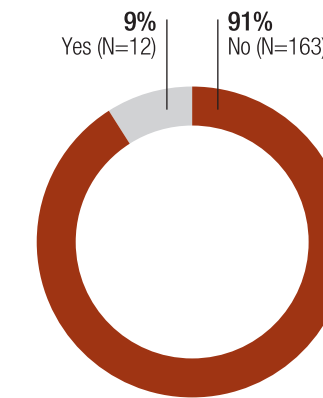


### Assessing Needs and Building upon Existing Models

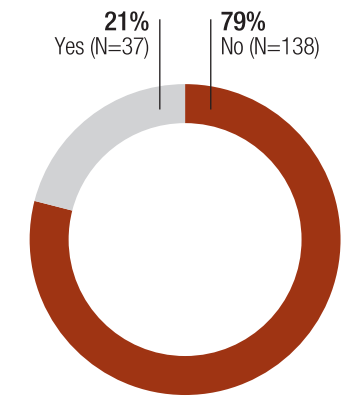
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**Figure 7.** Did Your Agency Build Upon an Existing Model? (N=175)

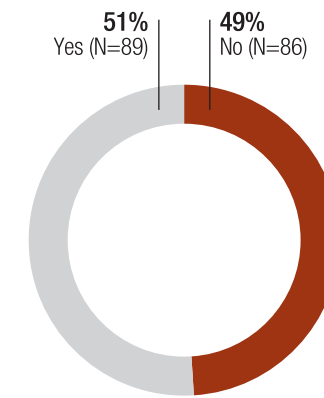


**Figure 8.** Did Immigrant Communities Provide Input During the Development of the Program? (N=175)

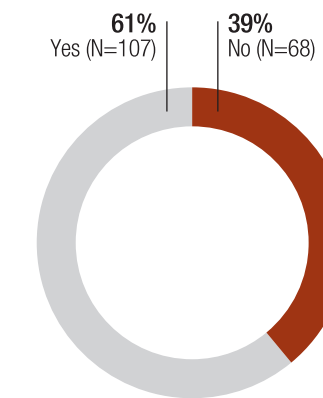


### Outreach Efforts to the Immigrant Community and Evaluation

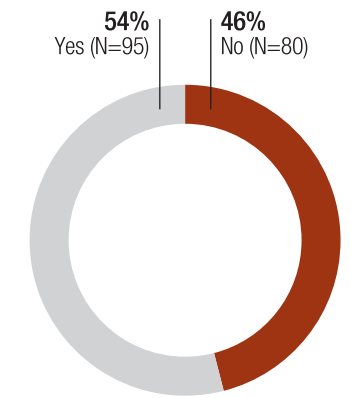
**Figure 9.** Does Your Agency Conduct Outreach in Substations and Local Precincts? (N=175)



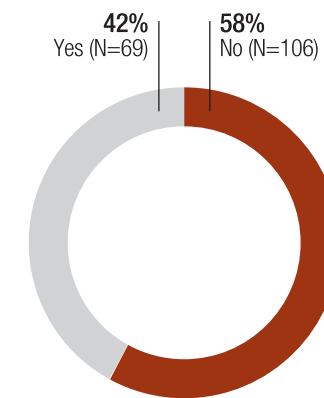
**Figure 10.** Does Your Agency Conduct Outreach at Immigrant Community Events? (N=175)



**Figure 11.** Does Your Agency Conduct Outreach through Ethnic Media Outlets? (N=175)

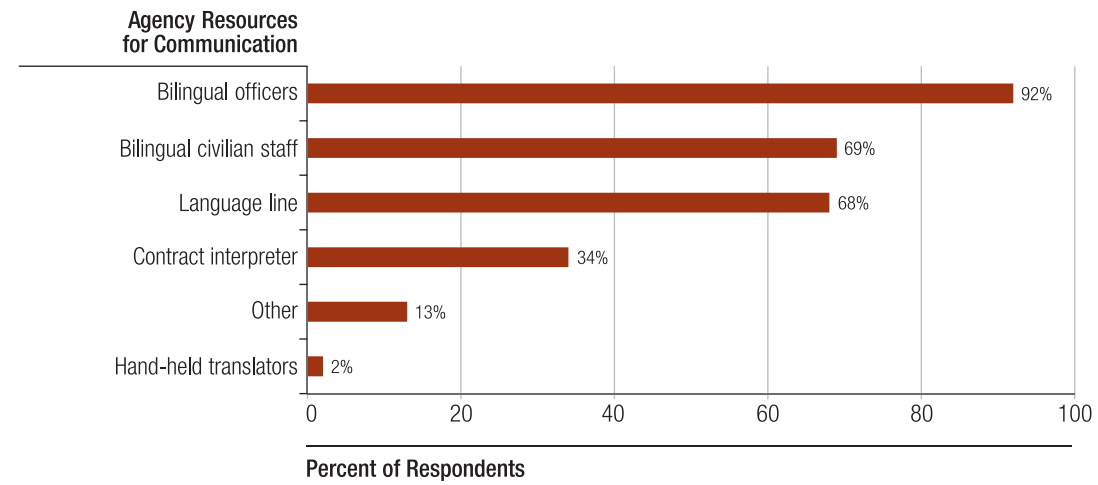


**Figure 12.** Has Your Agency Evaluated Its Services to Immigrant Communities or Involved the Immigrant Community in Evaluating Its Services? (N=175)

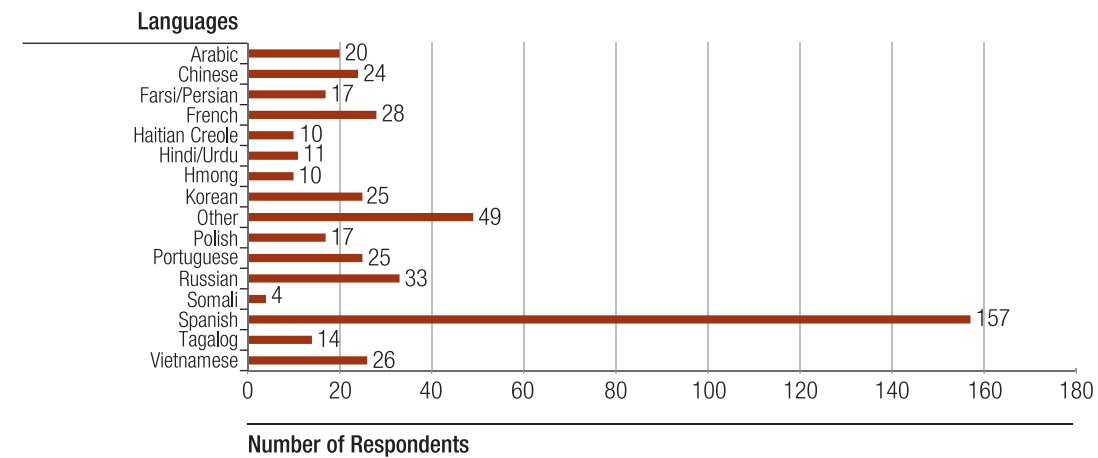


### Law Enforcement Services to Ensure Access to Limited English Proficient Individuals

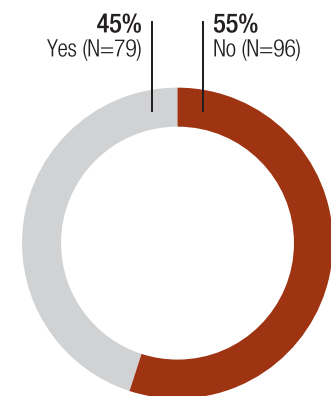
**Figure 13.** Agency Resources for Communicating with Limited English Proficient Individuals (N=175)



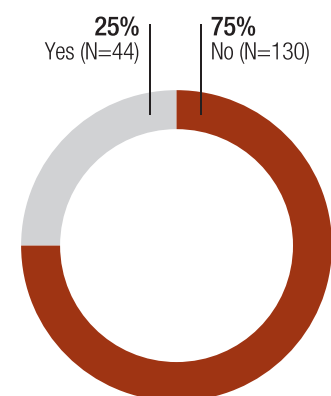
**Figure 14.** Languages Spoken by Bilingual Officers (N=175)



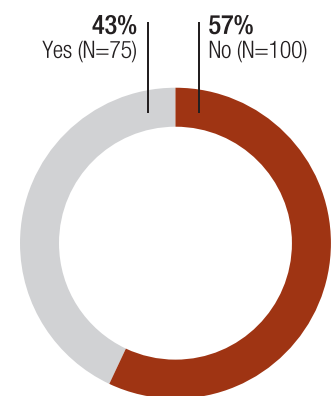
**Figure 15.** Does Your Agency Provide Incentives to Bilingual Personnel? (N=175)



**Figure 16.** Does Your Agency Assign Bilingual Officers to Areas with Large Limited English Proficient Populations? (N=174)

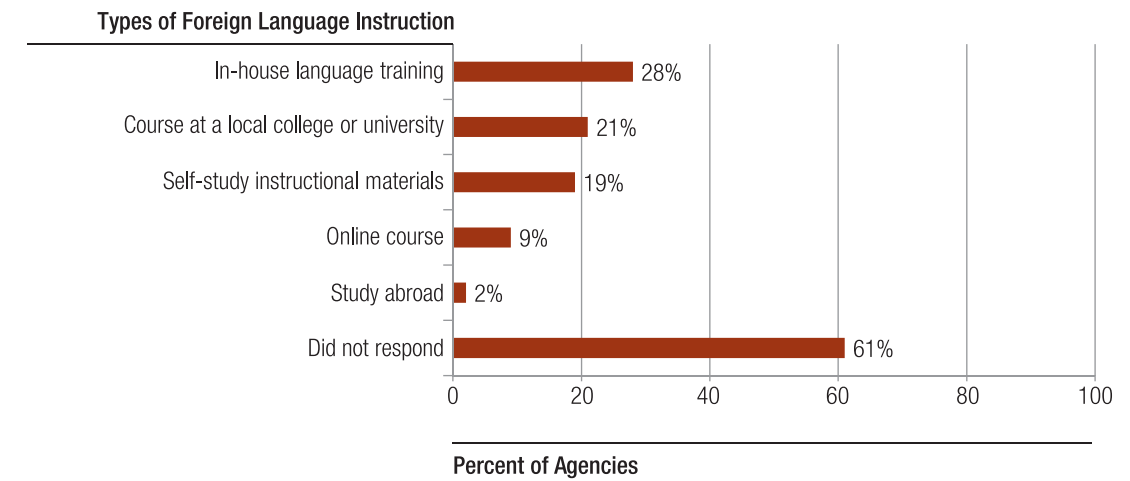


**Figure 17.** Does Your Agency Provide or Pay for Language Instruction? (N=175)



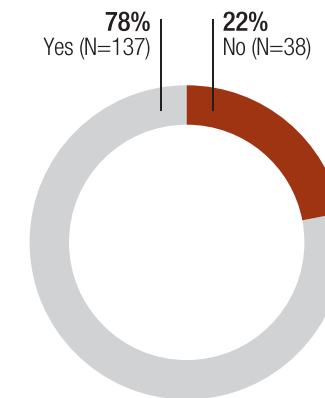
### Law Enforcement Services to Ensure Access to Limited English Proficient Individuals

**Figure 18.** Types of Foreign Language Instruction Offered by Respondent Agencies (N=160)

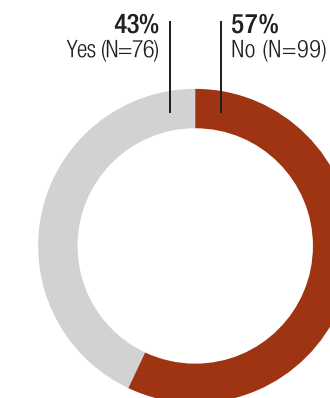


### Law Enforcement Training Initiatives

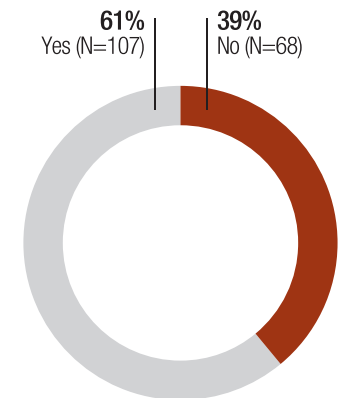
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## About the COPS Office

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The Office of Community Oriented Policing Services (COPS Office) is the component of the U.S. Department of Justice responsible for advancing the practice of community policing by the nation's state, local, territory, and tribal law enforcement agencies through information and grant resources.

Community policing is a philosophy that promotes organizational strategies that support the systematic use of partnerships and problem-solving techniques, to proactively address the immediate conditions that give rise to public safety issues such as crime, social disorder, and fear of crime.

Rather than simply responding to crimes once they have been committed, community policing concentrates on preventing crime and eliminating the atmosphere of fear it creates. Earning the trust of the community and making those individuals stakeholders in their own safety enables law enforcement to better understand and address both the needs of the community and the factors that contribute to crime.

The COPS Office awards grants to state, local, territory, and tribal law enforcement agencies to hire and train community policing professionals, acquire and deploy cutting-edge crime fighting technologies, and develop and test innovative policing strategies. COPS Office funding also provides training and technical assistance to community members and local government leaders and all levels of law enforcement. The COPS Office has produced and compiled a broad range of information resources that can help law enforcement better address specific crime and operational issues, and help community leaders better understand how to work cooperatively with their law enforcement agency to reduce crime.

- Since 1994, the COPS Office has invested nearly \$14 billion to add community policing officers to the nation's streets, enhance crime fighting technology, support crime prevention initiatives, and provide training and technical assistance to help advance community policing.
- By the end of FY2011, the COPS Office has funded approximately 123,000 additional officers to more than 13,000 of the nation's 18,000 law enforcement agencies across the country in small and large jurisdictions alike.
- Nearly 600,000 law enforcement personnel, community members, and government leaders have been trained through COPS Office-funded training organizations.
- As of 2011, the COPS Office has distributed more than 6.6 million topic-specific publications, training curricula, white papers, and resource CDs.

COPS Office resources, covering a wide breadth of community policing topics—from school and campus safety to gang violence—are available, at no cost, through its online Resource Information Center at [www.cops.usdoj.gov](http://www.cops.usdoj.gov). This easy-to-navigate website is also the grant application portal, providing access to online application forms.



Law enforcement faces many barriers to policing new immigrant communities and cultivating partnerships with these groups. Language barriers, immigrants' reluctance to report crime for fear of deportation, fear of police, federal immigration enforcement, and cultural differences, can lead to misunderstandings between law enforcement and community members. The *Engaging Police in Immigrant Communities* (EPIC) project highlights promising practices that law enforcement agencies nationwide are using to build effective police-immigrant relations. This guidebook is accompanied by podcasts on the same topic, as well as a website with additional materials and resources available through [www.vera.org/epic](http://www.vera.org/epic).



U.S. Department of Justice  
Office of Community Oriented Policing Services  
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Washington, DC 20530

To obtain details on COPS Office programs,  
call the COPS Office Response Center at 800.421.6770.

Visit COPS Online at [www.cops.usdoj.gov](http://www.cops.usdoj.gov)



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